

A History of Leigh Park and the Hamlet of Leigh

Compiled by Ralph Cousins



Sir George Staunton built this library in 1832 for his collection of 3,000 Chinese books. It is in the style of a Gothic Chapter House.

Havant Borough History Booklet No. 17

Read also: A Brief History of Stockheath, Farms in the Leigh Park Area, The Early Years of the Leigh Park Housing Estate and The Naval Camps of Bedhampton and Stockheath. Copies in the Leigh Park Library.

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Leigh Park Timeline

- Palaeolithic (before 10,000 BP). A single flint found near to Little Leigh Farm. (BP – before the present era, defined as being before 1950.)
- Mesolithic (10,000 BP-5000 BC). Eleven shallow pits that may have been hut or shelter sites with flint implements found near to Wakefords Copse.
- Neolithic (5000-2150 BC). Flints plus pottery fragments found near to Wakefords Copse.
- Bronze Age (2150-500 BC). Flints and pottery found near to Wakefords Copse.
- AD 43-410. Roman road constructed from Havant to Rowlands Castle.
- Roman period buildings, possibly a farmstead, and artefacts found near to Wakefords Copse.
- Middle Ages (Mediaeval). AD 400-1600.
- Land listed in the Saxon Charter of AD 935, King Athelstan to Whihtgar, minister. Possible settlement.
- 1236. The Winchester Pipe Rolls record the earliest documentary evidence of the Mediaeval place name *la Lye* being used.
- 1665. The Tithing of Leigh mentioned in the Hearth Tax Assessment.
- 1767. First mention of a large building at Leigh owned by Francis Higgins.
- 1767-1792. Copyhold held by Samuel Harrison who probably built the first Leigh House.
- 1792-1800. Copyhold held by Captain Thomas Lennox Frederick RN.
- 1800-1819. William Garrett enlarged the first house and purchased surrounding land creating an estate of some 828 customary acres (approximately 552 statute acres).
- 1819-1859. Sir George Thomas Staunton Bt., MP for South Hampshire and Portsmouth, again enlarged the house and created the pleasure grounds (lake, follies and gardens).
- 1859-1861. Captain Henry Cormick Lynch and the Lynch-Staunton family.
- 1861-1874. William Henry Stone MP for Portsmouth built the second Leigh Park house and demolished the first house, except for the library that remains.
- 1874-1904. Sir Frederick William John Fitzwygram Bt., respected patron in the Havant area and MP for Fareham, built cottages for estate workers of which many still stand.
- 1904-1920, Sir Frederick Loftus Fitzwygram Bt., inherited the estate.
- 1920-1936. The estate owned by Angela Lady Fitzwygram and her daughter Angela.
- 1936. Tenanted farmland sold to Southleigh Estates.
- 1936-1940. House empty but still owned by Angela Fitzwygram.
- 1940. Briefly occupied by Hilsea College for Girls.
- 1940-1956. Occupied by the Admiralty.
- 1944. House and surrounding land bought by Portsmouth City Council.
- 1947. 15 September. First trench dug to begin housing development.
- 1949. First houses occupied in Bramdean Drive.
- 1959. Second Leigh Park house demolished.
- 1985. Planning begins on the formation of the Staunton Country Park.
- 2010. 1 September. Hampshire's first academy, Havant Academy, opens.

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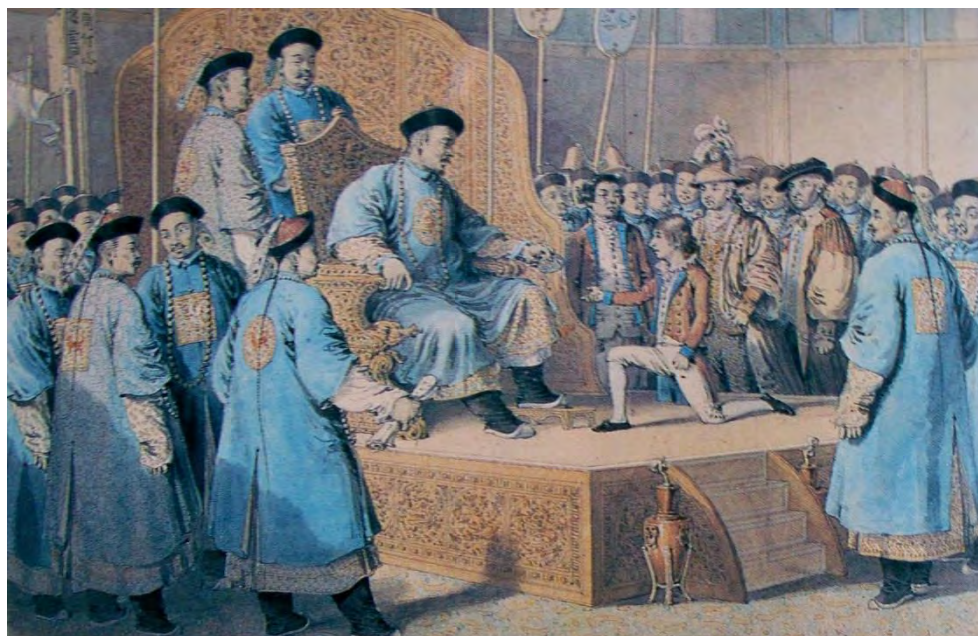
Basement.

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1819 Sale advertisement. Customary acre – a measure of land, often used in early documents, which could vary from one manor to another. In Havant as in a number of other manors in south-east Hampshire, the customary acre was about two-thirds of a statute acre.



George Staunton at an Imperial audience with the Chinese Emperor Qianlong in Jehol receiving a silk purse. From a 1793 watercolour painting by William Alexander.



A watercolour painting of Middle Park Farm by William Grant circa 1914.

Introduction



Portrait of Sir George Staunton at the age of 56 by Sir George Hayter, 1837

The origins of Leigh Park do not lie with the building of the large housing estate that we see today or even with Sir George Staunton.

Diligent research by the authors named in the sources for this brief history has revealed that the area has been inhabited intermittently since ancient times and possibly continuously for at least the last one thousand years.

All credit for the information contained in this brief history is due to them; especially John Pile for revealing the existence of the Hamlet of Leigh and Steve Jones for his extensive knowledge of previous owners of the estate. Thanks are also due to Richard Brown and his computer skills for putting this publication together.

I hope readers will realise that Leigh Park has something to be proud of which can be a foundation for its future – a heritage and identity of its own.

Ralph Cousins, August 2016
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Read also: Farms in the Leigh Park Area No. 19
A Brief History of Stockheath No. 2

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A Brief History of Leigh Park and the Hamlet of Leigh

John Pile and Steve Jones

Clearly it is not possible to say exactly when anybody first came to Leigh Park. Early humans, *Homo erectus* (upright man), migrated to England from Europe when the sea levels were much lower than they are today and dry land connected the two. There is no certainty about precise dates but David Miles in his book, *The Tribes of Britain* (London, 2005) says that the remains of a man found at Boxgrove, just to the east of Chichester, could date to 500,000 BP (Before Present) and the remains from the East Anglian coast may be from 700,000 BP. Francis Pryor, in his book *Britain B.C.: Life in Britain and Ireland before the Romans*, (London, 2003) places the 'era of the *Neanderthals*', who replaced *Homo erectus*, (upright man) at between 130,000 and 40,000 BP. These people in turn were followed by modern humans, *Homo sapiens*, (sensible, discerning, thinking man).

In early times the district of Leigh Park was part of the Forest of Bere. This was a predominantly wooded area that grew on the clays of the Eocene period, (56.5–35.4 million years ago), possibly the only original part of the forest that remains in the area is Great Copse, which is designated as being Ancient Woodland.

Several archaeological sites, various finds and surviving written records show that there has been some occupation here for several thousand years.

An oval-shaped handaxe which could be about 100,000-years-old was found about one mile to the east and a single flint implement found near to Little Leigh Farm was dated to the Palaeolithic period, (Old Stone Age, before 10,000 BP). Excavations on the highest ground near Wakeford's Copse¹, which is about 160 feet (49 metres) above sea level, revealed a number of shallow pits which dated from the Mesolithic Period (Middle Stone Age, 10,000 BP–5000 BC). These pits were interpreted as being the bases of temporary shelters and the stake-holes around the edges of some of them were thought to indicate the presence of windbreaks. With the pits, which were typical of this period, were found 429 pieces of flint and flint implements.

The Wakeford's site also provided evidence of Neolithic (New Stone Age, 5000–2150 BC) occupation. This was the period that saw the introduction of domesticated livestock, cereal cultivation and pottery making. Several pieces of Neolithic flint work and three fragments of distinctive types of pottery suggest that the area was occupied on two or three separate occasions during the latter part of the period.

The finding of a flint scraper, flint blade and several fragments of coarse pottery from the Bronze Age (2150–500 BC) suggest that there was a settlement nearby during this period. No evidence has been found of any occupation during the Iron Age (750 BC–AD 43) but a Late Iron Age site has been found on similar soils at Horndean.

Julius Caesar writing in the 1st century BC described the population of Britain as being exceedingly large. He said that: *The ground was thickly studded with homesteads and that woodland animals were numerous.*

This quotation is from, *Caesar: the Conquest of Gaul*, by S. A. Handford (trans). Penguin Classics edition, Harmondsworth, 1951. These animals would have grazed on the coastal plain and in the wood pastures of the forest. This description would certainly have applied to the coastal plain between Chichester and Havant.

One of the earliest signs of Roman administration (AD 43–410) in this area was the construction, immediately following the invasion, of a road linking Chichester with Winchester via Wickham. A minor road through the Lavant valley was constructed during AD 43–410 connecting Havant with pottery kilns and a small villa near Rowlands Castle. These kilns had more than a local significance as their products had a wide distribution and have been found as far away as Arundel and at other sites in West Sussex.

A group of sites and finds around the area suggests that a rural settlement existed here during Roman times. The flint footings of a large building together with evidence of an aisled barn with living quarters at one end and an open-sided shelter were found near the Mesolithic finds. This group of buildings within a ditched enclosure was interpreted as being a farmstead and dating evidence suggests that it was in use during the second half of the 3rd century AD. A cameo centrepiece from a Roman brooch was found nearby. Another Roman period site found by the side of the Lavant Stream close to the former Oak Park School was also possibly a farmstead.

Although it is likely that the area was still occupied after the Romans had left there is no positive evidence to support this except that it is known that the Saxons were present at Portchester and Droxford in the early 5th century AD.

At some time after this Hampshire became part of the kingdom of Wessex and in AD 662 the Bishopric of Wessex was moved from Dorchester-on-Thames to Winchester. Two Saxon charters refer to the transfer of land in this area. The first being in AD 935, King Athelstan to Whihtgar, minister, and the second being in AD 980, King Æthelred to the monks of Old Minster, Winchester.

The earliest documentary references to Leigh date from 1236 when it was recorded as '*la Lye*', from the Old English name **lēah**, but it is possible that the settlement had an earlier pre-Conquest (1066) origin. The meaning of the place-name is ambiguous; in this case it is more likely to refer to a settlement in a wooded environment. Leigh is not mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086², if it had existed at this time it would have been included with the manor of Havant. It is thought that the settlement of Leigh was centred on the area of the Staunton Country Park farm trail south of Middle Park Way.

In 1284 the monks exchanged Havant with the Bishop of Winchester for various other benefits and from this date the bishops' accounts for the manor were recorded annually in the Winchester Pipe Rolls. These mediaeval records are very detailed and contain regular references to tenants and properties in Leigh. For example: *2s 6d (12.5p) was spent during 1301/2 on mowing 5 acres³ of meadow in Hugelond.*

Havant Thicket to the north of Leigh was the bishop's hunting chase where the deer, timber, potters' clay and fullers' earth belonged to the bishop and the common wood-pasture was available for the use of his tenants.

It is not known when exactly Leigh became established as a hamlet⁴ but a quantity of pottery found close to the Leigh Park Farm house in 1992 was dated to the 12th and 14th centuries suggesting that it was in existence then.

The Hearth Tax Assessment⁵ of 1665 lists 24 households in the tithing⁶ of Leigh, but they may not all have been within the hamlet itself. (Map p. 46).

It is stated in the record of the bishop's official visit of inspection in 1725 that there were: *50 reputed Roman Catholics, of no great consequence, said to meet frequently at Middle Leigh in the parish of Havant with several others.*

These could have come from a wide area as the meeting places for Catholics were few and far between at this time.

One of those listed in the Hearth Tax Assessment for Leigh was Robert Higgins who paid tax on three hearths. In 1767 Francis Higgins, no doubt a descendant of Robert, sold: *A messuage⁷, barn and gate-room⁸ together with 9 acres (3.6 hectares) of land* to Captain (later Rear Admiral) Charles Webber for £340.

At some time Charles Webber's widow sold the property to Samuel Harrison who in about 1790, built a new house which, after alterations by later owners, became known as the first Leigh House. He also laid out the walled garden and built nearby the bothy⁹, stables and coach house that are used today for the farm trail reception area and offices.

Captain (later Rear Admiral) Thomas Frederick bought the property in 1792 and by the time of his death in 1800 it had been enlarged to some 20 acres,

The 1800 Ordnance Surveyors' drawings and other records show that there were about 30 dwellings in the hamlet of Leigh at this time although they may not all have been occupied. The 1810 Ordnance Survey map shows the hamlet of Leigh still there but it appears to be in decline.

William Garrett was probably responsible for this as after he bought the estate in 1800 for £480 he gradually enlarged it by buying adjacent land until it totalled some 828 customary acres. Of this he enclosed about 420 acres with park-paling and thus created Leigh Park. Cottages that were formerly the homes of copyhold¹⁰ tenants were incorporated into the estate, one called Silvester's became the home of the head gardener.

It was Garrett who laid out the pleasure grounds surrounding the house and converted the 18th century farm and outbuildings to the east into a '*ferme ornée*' (ornamental farm). He also built hothouses and greenhouses within the walled garden and replaced the southern wall with one of a crinkle-crankle (serpentine) design. The *Hampshire Telegraph* reported that Garrett lived: *In considerable state and he entertained parties of cricketers, being himself a cricketer of some fame besides being thoroughly well versed in field sports of all sorts.*

Stockheath Common was the cricket pitch for Havant before the estate pitch was established at Front Lawn. In 1817 Walter Butler described the estate as follows:

Leigh House has always attracted the notice of strangers, from the peculiar neatness of its appearance, its forest scenery, and its rich and interesting views of the sea. It stands upon a gentle eminence in a park of four hundred acres of hill and dale, ornamented with timber and plantations. All that wealth could command, or art supply, has contributed to embellish the beautiful domain. The house is substantially built, neatly finished, and comprises every comfort and conveniency in its domestic arrangements. The shrubberies are laid out with taste; and from its numerous wood-walks, at different points, are seen many interesting objects of the neighbourhood. The view of Havant Thicket from the hermitage, clad with ivy, upon the mount is of a more sedate kind, highly interesting from its deep shade in summer, its beautiful tints in autumn, and serving as a contrast to the more brilliant views of the sea and its islands. The gardens are planned with great judgement, and furnished with pinery, hot-house, green-houses and stoves, and surrounded with shrubberies and walks communicating in all directions. The farm buildings, dairy embellished with old china, and pheasantry adjoining, are detached from the mansion, and contribute by their nice arrangement to render this estate one of the most delightful residences in the country.

In 1817, Sir George Staunton, who at the age of 12 had gone to China with his father as part of Lord MacCartney's mission to set up trade links and subsequently worked there for 18 years, retired at the age of 37 and returned to England. Desiring a country seat in addition to his London home he bought Leigh House and the estate on 30 December 1819 for £22,000. The purchase included 17 cottages. On the 1 January 1820 he bought a further 156 acres of adjoining land and land at Rowlands Castle and Hayling Island for £2,878.

Over the next 40 years he built numerous follies, temples and other features in order to enhance and expand Garrett's pleasure grounds. He enlarged the cattle-drinking pond to make the lake that was known as Leigh Water. On one of the islands in the lake he built a fort where he would often raise the Chinese flag.

In 1828 the Havant to Horndean road, which passed within 30 yards (27 metres) of the entrance door of Leigh House, was moved 200 yards (183 metres) to the east. During this work a large brass Roman key was found. No doubt this new road was built to a better standard than the old one as in 1751 it was recorded that: *The road from Havant to Leigh was generally covered with water during the winter months, and foot passengers used a path to the east of the road hedge the whole distance.*

When Sir George Staunton bought the estate, the leases of the manor of Havant and the manor of Flood, a sub manor, were also transferred to him; in 1827 he bought these outright for the sum of £2,075-1s.-9d. (£2,075.09). As Lord of the Manor he was involved with the age-old ritual of the walking of the boundary of the parish during Rogation Week, which was known as the beating of the bounds. It is thought that it was so-called because at the various landmarks on the route a stop would be made and either the landmark or young children would be lightly beaten to ensure that they would remember where the boundary was. The record of the walk on 29 September 1820 noted: *'at East Leigh the boundary went through the oven of a cottage (into which oven crept a boy).'*

Sir George Staunton served as Conservative Member of Parliament for South Hampshire (which included Havant) from 1832 to 1835 in Lord Palmerston's parliament. He also served as Member of Parliament for Portsmouth from 1838 until 1852. In 1851 he gave land in New Lane for a new cemetery after the churchyard at St Faith's Church became full.

When Sir George Staunton, who was unmarried, died in 1859 the estate passed to his cousin Captain Henry Cormick Lynch. When he died six weeks later the estate passed to his son, George Staunton Lynch Staunton, who was required to change his surname to Staunton as a condition of his inheritance.

William Henry Stone bought the estate for £60,000 in 1861 and replaced the old house with a new 'Gothic Style Mansion'¹¹ designed by Richard William Drew which overlooked the lake. The bricks and tiles for this house were made nearby from clay dug from pits and fired in two kilns. However he did keep Staunton's octagonal library and his large glasshouse. The glasshouses have since been rebuilt.

During his short time here William Stone was very generous in sharing his estate with others less fortunate than himself. In the summer of 1866, T. E. Jones wrote in his guide to Hayling:

With a rare degree of liberality, Mr Stone throws his grounds open to the public inspection on the first and third Mondays of every month, by tickets, which are obtainable on application at the Bear Hotel, Havant. They are also opened to the public on holidays and other special occasions; and that the privilege is highly valued by the residents of Portsmouth and the neighbourhood is shown by the fact that on Whit-Monday in the present year no fewer than 2,000 persons visited the

grounds, whilst on 28 June 1866 (the 28th anniversary of Queen Victoria's coronation) the number present was about 14,000. Of course the great number of these belonged to the working-classes, and here and elsewhere the same testimony is borne to the good and orderly conduct of those gatherings of the people. Not a flower is plucked, nor a tree or shrub injured. The attendance of the police either in or out of uniform is unnecessary, and the more numerous the visitors the less appears to be even the risk of injury to the place. Two days' work, with a few extra gardeners, was suffice to remove all traces of an assemblage so vast as that last mentioned.

In 1870 Stone was awarded 727 acres (295 hectares) under the Inclosure Acts¹² the effect of which was to end the communal rights of his tenants to graze animals or collect timber from the areas of commonable land that included Havant Thicket, Stockheath and Leigh Green. However although this Inclosure included Stockheath Common it came with the obligation of:

Preserving the surface thereof in good condition and of permitting the same to be at all times used for Exercise and Recreation by the Inhabitants of the said Parish [Havant] and Neighbourhood.

William Stone served as Liberal Member of Parliament for Portsmouth from 1865 until 1874. At some time he established an allotment on five acres of his land in New Lane and in 1876 he transferred ownership to a trust, The Stone's Allotment Trust, with the stipulation that it was: *To be let for the relief of poverty among the labouring classes of the Parish of Havant.*

It has always been thought that it was Staunton who had constructed New Road to link Bedhampton Road with Stockheath Lane to avoid having the wait at the two level crossings after the railway had been built in 1847. However the sales catalogue of 1874 stated that it was Stone '*who had recently constructed the road*', but no doubt it was probably on the line of a track way established by Staunton when taking a short cut across his land.

In 1874 the estate was sold to Sir Frederick Fitzwygram who was a distinguished soldier and an accomplished veterinarian specialising in the welfare of horses. He was a much-respected local benefactor who supported many local societies. He continued William Stone's generosity of allowing the estate to be used by local residents; many enjoyed fêtes, flower shows, gymkhanas and ice-skating when the lake was frozen and Sunday school outings. He served as Conservative Member of Parliament for the Fareham Division from 1884 until 1900 and it was reported that in support of his election campaign he held on the estate: *A Conservative fête the scale of which was never before equalled in the south of England.*

Sir Frederick died in 1904 and is buried in the family grave in the churchyard of Red Hill Church, Rowlands Castle. His son, Frederick, inherited the estate but died in 1920 as a result of an infection acquired while gardening. Sir Frederick's wife Angela Lady Fitzwygram continued to live in the house until she died in 1935. In 1936 the estate, apart from the house and gardens, was sold to Parkleigh Estates and continued to be farmed by fourteen tenant farmers.

Shortly after the outbreak of war in 1939 Leigh Park House was occupied for a short time by the Hilsea College for Girls. However following the first bombing raid on Portsmouth on 11 July 1940 the Admiralty took over the house as well as Westleigh House and transferred their Mine Design Department from HMS Vernon. At first this was called the Admiralty Mining Establishment and later on His Majesty's Underwater Countermeasures and Weapons Establishment. Over 200 people worked there until 1959 when it closed. Eastleigh House was taken over by the Women's Royal Naval Service (Wrens).

In 1941 a number of temporary buildings were erected in the Fraser Road area to house people bombed out in Portsmouth. In 1943 this area was extended out towards Hazelholt Drive and Nissen huts¹³ were erected to provide a camp as an extension to the HMS Daedalus naval base. It was named Daedalus III. At the end of the war the camp was first used to house refugees who had been displaced mainly from the Baltic States after which Portsmouth City Council converted the buildings for use as temporary housing. Leigh Park's first infant and junior school, Stockheath School, was established in what was part of the camp.

Another naval camp, Stockheath Camp, was built on some 200 acres to the north of Great Copse Drive. This closed in 1946 and the Nissen huts and buildings were used as temporary housing and a community centre. The camp swimming pool also remained in use for a time.

There was also a Naval/Army camp between the Petersfield Road and St Albans Road. At the end of the war the empty Nissen huts were taken over by squatters before they too were used for temporary housing. The former canteen was put to use as a community centre and as the first St Alban's Church.

In addition to these camps there was a Commando training ground alongside Bartons Bridge and troops were camped in Battins Copse prior to the D-Day invasion on the 6 June 1944.

The whole area played an important role during the war period and as most personnel only stayed here a short time many thousands would have been able to claim Leigh Park as their 'home' for a period of their lives. Tragically for some it may well have been their last home in England.

At a meeting of Portsmouth City Council on 26 October 1943 the first indications of Leigh Park's future were announced. The Corporation envisaged building 'The

Garden City of the South to provide decent homes for service personnel and their families after the end of the Second World War (1939–1945) and to help meet the need to replace the many houses which were destroyed or damaged during the bombing of the city. The original idea was to build this *'Utopia'* as a *'New Town'* – the official definition of which was a *'completely separate self-contained community'*. Leigh Park was to be a group of *'villages'* clustered around a central civic and shopping area.

In 1944 Portsmouth City Council's plans for the estate were outlined and, despite opposition from the Havant & Waterloo Urban District Council, they eventually completed the purchase of Leigh Park House and the surrounding 1,671 acres (678 hectares) for the sum of £123,465, which worked out at only £74 per acre (£182 per hectare). The Lord Mayor of Portsmouth cut the first trench on 15 September 1947 and in 1949 the first houses occupied were those in Bramdean Drive.

However, also in 1949, the *'Utopian Dream'* started to fall apart with the publication of a report by Max Lock the Area Planning Consultant. He concluded that a separate *'New Town'* was not required and that only 800 houses should be built and then handed over to the Havant & Waterloo Urban District Council whose boundaries included Leigh Park. Unfortunately the New Town idea was dropped and, not surprisingly, the suggestion that the development should be handed over to Havant was quietly forgotten.

Building work progressed over the next few years until eventually Leigh Park became one of the largest municipal housing estates in Europe containing some 10,000 houses and a population at its peak of about 39,000. The present day population is now around 28,000 and over half of the houses are privately owned.

Because of its dilapidated state the second Leigh Park House was demolished in 1959.

Havant Council's first buildings were 50 prefabricated bungalows (prefabs) erected in the Lockerley Road area and named Havant Way. These were followed by the houses in Stockheath Way, Battens Way (so called because of a misspelling of Battins by the council sign-makers) and those on the eastern side of Bedhampton Way.

Although a new home in the countryside was like a dream come true the first residents had much to struggle with. As well as being separated from family and friends they were also far from their place of work and for many the day started with a bicycle ride to the dockyard – nearly nine miles to ride to work in the morning and another nearly nine miles to ride home in the evening. There were no pavements, streetlights or shops, except mobile ones, and not much public transport – but there was plenty of mud.

Local shopping parades along with the main centre at Park Parade were soon built and then later the Greywell Precinct. Schools, churches, public houses, doctors'

surgeries, a community centre and bowling alley all followed. Major employers such as Tambrands, Minimodels, Plessey, Vickers, Kenwood and many others became established both within Leigh Park and nearby New Lane.

However the development of alternative shopping centres outside the estate and the relocation of several employers have caused a decline in the vitality and viability of the area. In recent years various schemes have been drawn up to address these issues but little progress has been made and residents have become disillusioned. Hopefully one day the original *'Utopian Dream'* for Leigh Park will come to fruition and confirm Walter Butler's 1817 observation that: *'the estate was one of the most delightful residences in the country.'*

Notes

1. Wakeford's Copse was planted about 1800 as a crop of oak trees to help replace the many that had been felled for shipbuilding. It was named after George Wakeford an estate tenant.
2. Domesday Survey – record of all land and buildings and their worth carried out by order of William I in 1086.
3. Acre – land area that was based on the amount that could be ploughed by a pair of oxen in one day. Sometimes called a Customary Acre it varied in size from manor to manor and in Havant this was about two-thirds of a statute acre.
4. Hamlet – small village usually without a church.
5. Hearth Tax – tax of two shillings (10p) per year levied on each fireplace in a house between 1662 and 1689.
6. Tithing – nominally a settlement of 10 households or an area of 10 hides. Hide – area of land believed to have been necessary to support a family.
7. Messuage – a house and outbuildings and adjacent land.
8. Gate-room – probably a paved or cobbled enclosed yard, perhaps in the front of a house/farmhouse.
9. Bothy – lodging place for farm workers.
10. Copyhold – tenure of land based on manorial records.
11. Gothic – style of architecture popular in 12th to 14th century Europe.
12. Inclosure or Enclosure Act – an Act under which open fields and common land were enclosed and re-allocated to those tenants who had previously enjoyed rights of common over the whole of it. The land consequently became private land.
13. Nissen hut – large tunnel-shaped hut of corrugated iron with a cement floor used as living accommodation for service personnel. It was named after its designer Colonel Peter Norman Nissen (1871–1930).

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Leigh Park and the Forest of Bere – Steve Jones

At one time the whole of the area of Leigh Park was covered by trees and was part of a much larger area which eventually became known as the Forest of Bere. Over the years most of the trees have been removed but two of the original parts, The Thicket and Great Copse, remain.

To begin with the origin of the Forest of Bere we must travel back around 30,000 years to the final stages of the fourth Ice Age when the Northern Ice Cap stretched far to the south engulfing what is now Germany, Switzerland and Southern Russia. The ice sheets did not quite reach Bere itself but the area would have been dominated by frozen tundra and the climate of South Hampshire would have been akin to what we know as the Arctic.

Sometime after 20,000 BC the gradual thaw was becoming more apparent and once the ice sheets had retreated from the British Isles vegetation slowly spread across southern England, with the area that became the Forest of Bere becoming completely covered in trees, with birch the dominant species followed by oak, lime, beech and elm. This can be said for most of Britain except for the colder harsher area of the north. The type of forest found in any one area depended on the type of soil and the underlying geology. Locally the low lying land between Portsdown Hill and the South Downs is mostly London Clay which after the great thaw was dominated by oak whilst the downs themselves of lighter soils supported trees like lime and elm.

Certainly by 8,000 BC Mesolithic man was occupying parts of southern England and evidence of occupation can be found close by at Leigh Park when excavations were carried out there in 1970 at Wakefords Copse. Further excavations and discoveries in the area suggest that occupation was evident by the time of the Neolithic period when some form of farming and agriculture was taking place. Because of the nature of the woodland it was becoming exploited for its animals and grazing land and these earlier inhabitants settled mainly on the Downs where the lighter soil was more easily cleared of trees.

Occupation and clearing of the forest for agriculture was carried on during the Bronze Age, especially to the south, closer to the coastal zone, where there is evidence of metal-working and more advance cultivation techniques.

Certainly, what the local area had to its advantage was the supply of water which fell on the Downs and permeated the chalk and travelled under the clay of the Hampshire Basin before surfacing in a line of around 30 springs between Bedhampton and Havant. Other springs have their origin closer to Waterlooville with the Hermitage Stream rising in Queens Enclosure and notably at Purbrook where the Pur Brook rises close to Purbrook Heath. Other springs are now hidden from view and are piped.

With the arrival of the Romans some form of administration was carried out within the forest, although the Romans to an extent adopted the existing tribal arrangements which appeared to have been in the hands of two tribes; the western part of the forest being within the land of the Belgae and the eastern area was part of the land of the Regnenses, the most populous of the many tribes of southern Britain. During the Roman period settlements and military sites were linked by a network of roads, the local area crossed by a road from Chichester to Portchester and Bitterne with portions of Roman roads still visible in Bedhampton and by tree lines in Purbrook and Purbrook Heath Road on its way to Southwick and Wickham.

The Romans certainly left their mark locally with small villas and farmsteads being discovered in the forest and on the peripheral edge of the forest, notably at Crookhorn and at Wakefords Copse, where a farmstead and notable finds were found in 1970. Others at Warblington, Langstone and Maize Coppice Farm have also shown signs of Roman occupation. Throughout the forest in general high status Roman sites, possibly relating to Roman hunting estates, have been discovered, precursors of the royal hunting forest which was later established from the Norman period.

After the Roman Empire gave up control of Britain in the 5th-century AD the Angles, Saxons and Jutes, mainly from Germany, took control of the country with mostly the Jutes taking control of the area associated with the forest, although, evidence suggests that the existing peoples were not driven out or destroyed. The forest at this time was still a remote area with pockets of occupation here and there, interestingly the Saxon monk and historian Bede, writing in the 8th-century AD described the wooded land of the 'Meonwara', around the Meon Valley, a century earlier, as among the last in England to be converted to Christianity. This suggests that the area was still quite remote and probably not considered politically significant.

By the Saxon period the majority of both the Downland and the Coastland settlements had been made; most can be identified in the Domesday Book with others such as Farlington appearing after the Norman invasion. It was during this period that the local population began managing the forest landscape in an organised manner. Also at this period that the word 'Bere' is first introduced in the name of the forest. Two suggestions have been put forward over the origin of the name; firstly that it meant swine pasture, from the Saxon word 'Baer'; secondly that it takes its name from the many bears that still lived in the area at this time.

It was also around this time that the land was organised into a series of commons, each one serving several communities of one Saxon Estate, locally one example is Blendworth Common and within it, Hazleton Common, still survive as does remnants of other former commons. The commons would provide grazing for animals, trees

provided timber for building and grasses were used for roofing materials as well as for making baskets.

This system of communing worked because it meant the sharing of the land's resources over a very large area which enabled it to support many people. This management with its extensive grazing over a very large area brought with it wildlife that could adapt to coppice woods, open wood pasture, meadows and heathlands.

The Normans and the Royal Forest of Bere

In the years after the Norman Conquest in 1066 the Forest of Bere was established as one of the Royal Forests of Hampshire, one of many across England. Interestingly proportionally more were in Hampshire, close to the capital at that time, Winchester. These Royal Forests were established to allow Norman monarchs to hunt deer and other wild beasts including boar. Deer especially were introduced into the forest including fallow, roe and the native red deer. It is unclear when Bere was made into a Royal Forest, the popular theory is that it became so in the latter part of the 11th century but other sources suggest the 12th century.

The word 'Forest' had nothing to do with trees; translated from the Latin word 'foris' its meaning is outside, originally referring to the new legal definition of a landscape. A forest as established by the Normans differed from the rest of the country not by reason of the amount of timber that grew there, but because in that area the Law of the Forest, and not the law of England, prevailed and it stayed under Forest Law for the next 800 years.

The commoners were not forgotten under the new laws but restrictions were placed upon them especially concerning the deer, who had exclusive rights to roam, and no man had the right to fence them out of their property or hunt them themselves, this being the preserve of the Crown. This can be borne out by the saying that the Norman Kings preferred the deer to their own relations. The 'protected animals' were of two kinds, the 'Beasts of the Chase', that is the members of the deer family, and the 'Beasts of the Warren', the rabbits, hares and lesser sporting fry.

There were also restrictions on the rights to harvest timber, which previously had been granted to local people, commoners and tenants under common law. This would certainly be the case in later years when timber from the forest was used extensively for ship building. It was not all bad news for the local population as within the forests in general, and the Forest of Bere in particular there could be many separate rights and franchises which allowed ordinary individuals to exercise on their own lands, within the forest or without, prerogatives normally reserved for the Crown. In this district there are a great many examples of this, and the lands which actually belonged to the Crown in the Forest of Bere appear to have been a

relatively small proportion of the whole, when due regard has been made for all the rights in the forest enjoyed by various subjects.

At the time of the Conquest both Hugh de Port, who held Bedhampton, and Roger de Montgomery of Warblington and Chalton, had the right to hunt in Bere. To safeguard their interests they built guardhouses, which were miniature castles, at Rowlands Castle, Motley in Idsworth, on the road to Southwick on the north of Portsdown Hill and in Southwick Park.

To protect the Crown's interests new teams of keepers and under-keepers under a Warden appointed by the Crown were employed with up to 60 employed at one time. Within this administration the Forest was given legal boundaries and a perambulation would occasionally take place around the boundaries, noting any encroachment into the forest. The forest also had its own court of Verderers, instituted in 1306, who enforced the Forest Law, and it contained many and varied separate rights and franchises, which made it of far less importance to the Crown but punishment was often severe for poachers in the forest.

Due to the size of the forest it needed to be administered from two locations. The western part of the Forest of Bere, known as Bere Ashling, stretched from the River Test at Romsey to the River Itchen and at one time included the entire area around Winchester. The Forest of East or South Bere, also known as Bere Portchester, stretched from Winchester to Southampton, passing just to the North of Titchfield, and ended only at the Sussex Border and was initially administered from Portchester Castle and was divided into two Walks, the West Walk and the East Walk. Dividing the two sections were the Chases including the district around Bishop's Waltham known as Waltham Chase and Hambledon Chase, both held by Royal Licence by the Bishop of Winchester who had the right to the deer, as he did too in Havant Chase (Thicket), also considered a part of the forest. These were run along the same lines as the Royal Forest, but were not under Forest Law.

The part of the forest which lay in Bedhampton Manor and Parish was the private park of the Lord of the Manor of Bedhampton. The difference between a park and a chase was that a chase was 'open' whilst a park was enclosed by a pale (fence).

In the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries Verderers' Courts were held in Winchester and the juries were drawn from the Winchester area but in 1685 the Courts were transferred to Creech Lodge and remained there until 1733 and then transferred to West Lodge until 1768, when no further Courts were held.

Being a Royal Forest Henry II was amongst other Kings who hunted in Bere Forest, staying at Rowlands Castle to do so. Charles I stayed at Southwick House to hunt in the Forest of Bere in 1628, being the last recorded monarch to hunt in the Forest. By this period hunting appears to have run its course with timber production more important and other forests being more suitable for hunting. Documentary evidence

suggests that the Forest of Bere was probably one of the worst managed forests in England and crime also played its part there. The London Road from Portsmouth, which now passes through Waterlooville, was the only route through the Forest of Bere from the coast to the South Downs. It was a rough muddy track and notorious for highwaymen.

The Enclosure of Havant Thicket – Robert West

In the Middle Ages the common lands of the parish of Havant would have comprised an open field system for arable cultivation and several dispersed areas of woodland, heath and coastal marsh, all defined legally as 'waste' though they were far from useless or unproductive.

Of the open field system we have no knowledge. It must have been enclosed at an early date, possibly in the Tudor period, and by informal agreement, thus leaving no documentary evidence. But the waste lands, totalling some 887 acres, remained unenclosed until the middle of the 19th Century, and by far the largest proportion of this - over 90% - was Havant Thicket. The other areas were Stockheath, Leigh Green, and some coastal marsh at South Moor, West Marsh and Broad Lane.

Havant Thicket had originally been part of the huge Forest of Bere, but became detached from it in the late 11th Century and later passed into the possession of the Bishops of Winchester, most probably when they acquired the Lordship of the Manor of Havant in 1284. It then became a 'Chase' for them to hunt deer, and this suggests that the landscape may have been substantially altered at this time. 'Thicket' is an Anglo-Saxon word defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as *a dense growth of shrubs, underwood and small trees; a place where low trees and bushes grow thickly together*; but such a landscape is useless for hunting, so converting it into a Chase would have entailed the clearing of much undergrowth, leaving extensive open spaces between the trees, much as is to be seen today. (One large clearing is still marked on maps as Deerslaught Plain.)

Just how frequently the bishops hunted here is open to question, for the Thicket was just one of a number of Chases that they possessed in Hampshire and must have been nowhere near as important as, say, Waltham Chase (also created out of the Forest of Bere) which was conveniently adjacent to their palace at Bishops Waltham. Nevertheless when they leased out the Lordship of the Manor of Havant to Ralph Cotton in 1553 they chose to retain their hunting rights and also their right to cut timber.

The bishops continued to lease out the Lordship until 1827 when it was purchased outright for the sum of £2,075 1s. 9d. (£2,075.09) by Sir George Staunton, the owner of the Leigh Park estate. By this time, however, the herd of deer had been severely depleted, almost to the point of extinction. The trouble was that the Thicket (like all chases and in contrast to deer parks) had no fenced or ditched boundaries, leaving the deer free to wander out and, just as importantly, poachers to wander in. Even as late as 1801 the authors of the Hampshire

Repository could assert that *we still meet with fallow deer in this chace* (although they conceded that poaching was a problem) but Walter Butler, in his Topographical Account of the Hundred of Bosmere, published just 16 years later, painted a much gloomier picture:

Till late it (The Thicket) harboured a herd of fallow deer, the property of the bishop; a keeper was appointed over them; but all his vigilance, or the severity of the game laws, could not prevent their destruction, either by farmers when the deer wandered from their haunts into the neighbouring farms, or by other persons, who shot them in the thickest part of the forest in defiance of the gamekeeper.

The right to cut timber, however, was much more important than the right to hunt. Indeed it was the subject of a complex and protracted legal dispute between the Bishop of Winchester and Joseph Franklin (the then leaseholder of the Lordship) in the late 18th Century, and the bishops were careful to retain their timber rights even after they sold the Lordship to Staunton. Just how profitable these could be was demonstrated in 1829 when the following advertisement appeared in the local press:

To be SOLD by AUCTION at the Bear Inn, Havant, on Monday 16th March 1829. Upwards of 6000 OAK TIMBER TREES with their lop, top and bark, being in different parts of Havant Thicket, at a very short distance from the sea. All the trees are numbered and marked with white paint, and are of useful sizes for a variety of purposes.

There were in all 19 separate lots and the destruction that must have ensued after they had been disposed of is dramatically conveyed in James King's *A Poem Upon Leigh Park: The Seat of G.T. Staunton Bart.* which was published just six months after the auction:

Hark to the echo of the woodman's stroke
Hark to the thunder of the falling oak!
Why thus insult this venerable place?
Why from their haunts the guiltless Dryada chase?
And why these unwanted noises scare Each beast and herd that
long hath nestled there?

King (who was actually one of Staunton's tenants) was under the impression that all this timber was to be used by the Bishop of Winchester himself for some grandiose building scheme:

Soon from their spoils a palace shall arise
And with its swelling dome invade the skies.
Grudge not its burthen to the groaning swain
That bears the tribute of this lone domain.
What sylvan gladly yields not her retreat
When Winton's prelate rears the pastoral seat?

But the reality was, of course, that the vast majority at any rate was sold for hard cash.

The Bishop of Winchester, however, was not the only person to enjoy rights in Havant Thicket, for the Copyhold tenants of the Lords of the Manors of Havant and Flood were entitled to graze their horses and cattle there, turn out their pigs in the autumn to feed on the acorns (a right known as pannage), cut furze and underwood for fuel, and even take some timber, provided they had none of their own and it was used for repairing their own property. (Even then they were permitted to take enough for just half of any such repairs.)

When Staunton purchased Leigh Park in 1819 these common rights were attached to some 325 properties, most of them belonging to the Manor of Havant and just 15 to the Manor of Flood.

The Manor of Flood requires some explanation. It was not a particular area but rather a number of separate properties within the Manor of Havant, the majority in West Street (including the Dolphin Hotel) the remainder in Homewell, North Street and Durrants. Longcroft, in his *Hundred of Bosmere* (p.26) believed that it was created by Ralph Cotton when he obtained the lease of the Lordship of the Manor of Havant in 1553, perhaps as a means of raising some extra revenue; but its true origins are wholly unknown, as is the origin of its name. Moreover as the Lord of the Manor of Havant was always Lord of the Manor of Flood, and as the terms of tenancy in both manors seems to have been more or less identical, it is difficult to view the Manor of Flood as anything more than an arcane legal curiosity.

By the time the Act of Parliament authorising the enclosure of the Thicket and the other waste lands of the parish had been passed in 1864 the process of enclosing the common lands or England, begun in the 16th Century, was practically complete. Virtually all the arable open field systems had long since vanished and the enclosure of woods, moors, heaths was proceeding apace.

Originally each individual enclosure scheme required its own Act of Parliament, but in 1836 the law was relaxed to allow enclosure by consent, without the need for Parliamentary approval, provided certain conditions were met. But this was soon deemed to be a step too far, and in 1845 new safeguards were introduced. Henceforth all enclosure schemes had to be vetted by independent Inclosure Commissioners ('inclosure' being the formal leagal spelling of the word) and in 1852 the requirement to obtain parliamentary approval was re-introduced. Now, however, instead of separate Acts for each scheme a number of them could be bundled together in a single Act. This is precisely what happened in Havant's case, for its Act of Inclosure, which received the Royal Assent early in September 1864, also included 24 other schemes from all over the country. (The enclosure of North Common and Creek Common in North Hayling parish was also attached to the Havant scheme.)

This desire to make the enclosing of common lands much easier to obtain was driven not only by economic factors (they were felt to be an inefficient way of using the land) but also by fears that they endangered the social order, and this Establishment attitude towards them is neatly summed up by Walter Butler (himself a solicitor who would later become Staunton's steward on the Leigh Park estate):

Commons are great public nuisances, the resort of gypsies and vagrants, who poach the game, break down the fences and prey upon the public without contributing anything towards the common good.

Writing when he did, in 1817, Butler would most certainly have had Havant Thicket in mind, for it seems that in the early years to the 19th Century it and other common lands in the area such as Emsworth Common and Hambrook Common were particularly prone to highway robbery. According to the anonymous author of *Old Portsmouth: Pictures of the Past* which appeared in the *Hampshire Telegraph* in 1887:

Havant and its neighbourhood was a favourite haunt for the highwayman. The secluded parts about Hambrook Common and Havant Thicket were never safe for the unarmed traveller after dark.

The worst year by far was 1807 when robberies, previously confined to winter and night-time, were taking place all year round and often in broad daylight. The article continues:

In the winter of 1807 the Magistrates met at Havant and invested all the constables and peace officers of the adjoining parishes with proper authority to search for and apprehend all suspected persons, especially all such persons who were found on Emsworth Common, Havant Thicket and the surrounding forest. On that night the roads were patrolled by peace officers and Volunteers. A corridor was drawn around the commons, but although many vagrants and pedlars were arrested during the next few days and detained until the victims could inspect them, not one of them was connected with any of the crimes that had inspired the neighbourhood with such terror.

In reality most of the robberies had been committed by just one man, John Pitt, a sawyer who lived near Stansted, and after he was convicted and hanged in the spring of 1808 things became much quieter. It is probably not entirely coincidental, however, that in 1810 Emsworth Common was enclosed, and Acts to enclose other local commons at Blendworth, Cosham, Chalton and Clanfield were all passed within the next three years. Hambrook Common was finally enclosed in 1820.

Why Havant Thicket escaped a similar fate at this time is uncertain; possibly its episcopal links saved it.

Charles Longcroft tells us (in a letter to the *Hampshire Telegraph* of 1 July 1865 to which we shall return) that after Sir George Staunton acquired the Manorial Lordships he did try to enclose the Thicket, but could not reach agreement either with his tenants or the Bishop of Winchester over compensation for the relinquishment of their customary rights. He did, however, buy up a large number of Copyhold tenancies and convert them to Freehold, reducing the number of properties with commoners' rights to about 100 - 120. By this time the Thicket was certainly a much less dangerous and marginal place, but even as late as 1846 it was still the venue for an illegal prize fight between John Jones of Portsmouth and Ted Hill of Brighton. The

bout had actually commenced at Prinsted, but was broken up by the authorities after 12 rounds, at which point the pugilists – and, presumably, the crowd watching them – decamped to the Thicket where the remaining six rounds were contested, Jones emerging as the clear winner. (Bell's *Life In London*, 29 November 1846.)

Staunton died in 1859 and after his Leigh Park estate (and with it the manorial lordships) had passed briefly first to a cousin, Henry Lynch, and then to Lynch's son George, it was put up for auction in October 1860 and purchased for £60,000 by William Henry Stone.

Stone was only 27 and an ambitious would-be politician of firm Liberal persuasions who was clearly as keen on reform on his own estate as he was in his politics, for he wasted little time in demolishing Staunton's modest house and replacing it with a Gothic mansion overlooking the lake, erecting an impressive new stable-block and coach-house and clearing away most of Staunton's collection of garden follies, statues and monuments. Enclosing Havant Thicket, therefore - and thus ending what he must have regarded as the feudal anachronisms of commoners' rights and episcopal privileges – must have seemed, like the perfectly logical thing to do. According to Longcroft's letter of July 1865 he soon came to an agreement with all the major interested parties, including the Bishop, over compensation, and once this had been achieved Parliamentary approval was little more than a formality.

At the end of November 1864,, just weeks after this approval had been obtained, the following notice appeared in the *Hampshire Telegraph*:

I, RICHARD PINK of Hambledon in the County of Southampton the Valuer acting in the matter of the Inclosure of Havant Thicket, Stock Heath, Leigh Green, Southmoor, West Marsh, Broad lane, North Common and Creek Common situate in the parishes of Havant and North Hayling, in the County of Southampton, hereby give notice that I shall hold a meeting on the 17th day of December 1864, at the Bear Inn, in the said parish of Havant, at Eleven o'clock in the forenoon, for the purpose of receiving claims in writing from all the persons claiming any common or other rights of interest... (in the said lands)... and such claims must state the several particulars in respect of Freehold, Copyhold Customary and Leasehold from each other and mentioning therein the place of abode of the respective claimants, or their agents, of which notice in respect of such claims may be delivered.

Given under my hand this 26th day of November in the Year of our Lord 1864

RICHARD PINK

A second meeting was convened on the 14 January 1865 and a third on the 18 February (both at the Bear), after which no more claims were to be considered.

At first sight Richard Pink seems like an odd choice for Valuer, for he was not a local man and had never before done any enclosure work. Moreover Havant had its own highly respected Valuer (not to mention surveyor, auctioneer and cartographer) in Charles Lewis, who had been working in the town for some 30 years. The most likely explanation for Pink's appointment by the Inclosure Commissioners is that he was a qualified Timber Surveyor (Lewis was not) and as

by far the most substantial part of the valuation would concern the Bishop of Winchester's timber rights in the Thicket it was probably felt that expertise in this field was essential.

But before Pink could complete his task of assessing the hundred or more claims that must have been submitted to him, the enclosure of the Thicket suddenly became a political issue when a General Election was called for 13 July 1865.

As Stone was standing as one of the two Liberal candidates for the Borough of Portsmouth seat his Conservative opponents lost no time, once campaigning commenced at the end of June, in portraying the enclosure scheme in the worst possible light. They issued a pamphlet - now unfortunately lost - entitled *Facts for Working Men* in which they accused Stone of acting like an autocrat, not only trampling on commoners' rights but also stopping up ancient rights of way through the Thicket. As a letter from 'A Quiet Looker-on' put it in the Conservative-supporting *Portsmouth Times and Naval Gazette* for 24 June:

Mr. Stone has been too busy of late managing his estate and superintending the closure of Havant Thicket, thus depriving the public of access to that delightful spot.

Then there was the Affair of the Impounded Cow, as described in another letter printed in the *Portsmouth Times and Naval Gazette* although said to have been sent originally to the Conservative Election Room:

Dear Sir, I have A Few Lines to acquaint you with agint Mr Stone, For the truth you Can ad on your Bills E Pounded a Poor Woman Cow For two Pound - and the Poor Woman Could not Rise the Money the Consequence was E sold the Poor Woman Cow to Pae the Poundage. Dear sir - I think this ought to be Publish for E cannot Be a man that is Good for Poor People. I remain yours truly an Elector.

Stone himself seems to have referred to the enclosure scheme only once, in an election address at the end of June, when he insisted that the measure was supported by both the Bishop of Winchester and virtually all the Copyhold tenants, in fact:

There were only two ladies (and these were interested only to a small extent) who had opposed it, the whole of the other parties agreeing that it would be a general benefit to the whole neighbourhood... All the parties would receive compensation, some in money, some in land.

Hampshire Telegraph, 1 July 1865

However the most comprehensive and robust defence of his conduct came from the Havant solicitor, Charles Longcroft, in his letter to the Liberal-supporting *Hampshire Telegraph* already alluded to:

Sir, I take no part in the Portsmouth election, he began, but the assertions in Facts For Working Men so far as they refer to the enclosure of Havant Thicket are so unfair to Mr. Stone that I trouble you with the following explanation ...

The assertion that Stone was riding roughshod over commoners' rights was absurd, Longcroft insisted:

Because for a long time most of the Copyholders have desired to enclose the waste and, in contrast to Sir George Staunton, Stone had offered to purchase all of the allotments at a very fair valuation. Thus an agreement had been reached that was in every way desirable for all parties.

As to the blocking off of rights of way, Longcroft was adamant that *no ancient footways have been stopped*. Admittedly some *unnecessary trackways* had been closed, but this was done by the Valuer and the Copyholders themselves, not by Stone, and in any case a new 30 foot wide road had been constructed from Riders Lane to Hoskins Hill *which was a great convenience to the public*.

Longcroft could not deny either that cattle had been impounded but:

The order for closing the Thicket and warning trespassers was affixed to the doors of public places of worship within the parishes of Havant and North Hayling before the Thicket was closed, and the impounding was the act of the Valuer and not that of Mr. Stone.

Nevertheless the charge that a poor woman's cow had been seized and then sold when she could not pay for its release was never disputed and is therefore most likely true, and Stone was even heckled about this when he made an appearance at one of the polling booths in Portsmouth on election-day. He was also, as will be evident later, somewhat premature in his closing of the Thicket.

These might seem like comparatively trivial matters, but the enclosure of commons and the loss of public access to them was a particularly contentious issue in the mid-1860s. Indeed in the very month that the election was contested the Commons Preservation Society was formed, primarily to oppose the widespread encroachment into common land around London - most notably in Epping Forest - which would lead to the passing of the Metropolitan Commons Act (protecting all common land within a 50 mile radius of large urban areas) in 1866. It was in 1866, too, that the New Forest Association was formed, in response to the controversial decision to enclose 10,000 acres of common land there.

But if his conduct over Havant Thicket did have any adverse impact upon Stone's vote it could scarcely have been significant, for he topped the poll with 2,184 votes. His fellow Liberal Gaselee was also elected with 2,105 votes. (All constituencies at this time returned two members and each voter had two votes.) The Conservatives Elphinstone and Bruce polled 1,667 and 1,559 votes respectively.

By the beginning of August 1865 Pink had completed his provisional assessment of the various claims for compensation over the loss of commoners' rights and the details of his awards were deposited at the Bear Inn for public inspection, with any objections to his assessments to be submitted in writing by 25 August. Two months later another meeting was

held at the Bear for *examination and determining claims of all concerned parties*, and the following April a revised schedule of assessments was issued.

The picture of near-perfect unanimity and legal probity regarding the enclosure of the Thicket that Stone and Longcroft had painted during the 1865 election campaign is somewhat undermined by what next transpired, for on 26 May 1866 a meeting was held (again at the Bear):

To consider the unsatisfactory proceedings which have taken place on the waste of Havant Thicket by reason of encroachment and enclosure of a large portion of the said waste by Mr Stone without the authority of the Valuer.

The Revd Barton took the chair, but before the meeting (which was attended by about seven or eight Copyholders) could commence Mr Appleby, the Fareham solicitor who was representing Stone, objected to the presence of the press and had them removed, leaving us frustratingly deprived of any further information.

Indeed we hear nothing more of the enclosure scheme for another year, but on 11 April 1867 a further meeting between the Valuer and the Copyholders was held at which almost all of the outstanding disagreements must have been resolved because on 3 June a legal document was signed by about 90 of Stone's Copyhold tenants relating to:

Relinquishment of rights of common by customary tenants of the Manors of Havant and Flood to Stone in Havant Thicket.

(HCRO 102M86/236)

Each tenant had been allotted a nominal parcel of land within the Thicket, its size reflecting Pink's assessment of the value of their commoners' rights, and once these had been agreed Stone began the lengthy process of buying up these allotments, some of them for considerable sums. James Gloyne, for instance, received £125; Charles Longcroft £215; Samuel Clarke £400 and Mary Hewett £638 1s. 5d. (£638.07). The largest sum was paid jointly to Mary Ann Rogers and Joseph Gadman of £950. (HCRO 102M 86/238)

By the time Stone had to defend his Portsmouth seat in the General Election of November 1868 (which he did successfully) the enclosure of the Thicket had ceased to be a contentious issue, and was not raised once during the campaign, but in fact it was not until 1870 that he completed his purchase of all the plots in the Thicket and it legally became his private domain.

By way of additional compensation for closing the Thicket he did provide some land for garden allotments in New Lane (which still survive) and granted a degree of public access to the 150 acres of Leigh Park's grounds and gardens. From 1864 onwards an annual fete was held here (usually on Coronation Day, 28 June) and in the summer of 1865, possibly to coincide with his election campaign, he actually threw his gardens open to the public, virtually without restriction. This bold gesture - which proved immensely popular - lasted for just one year however, because in 1866 public access was drastically curtailed. Henceforth admission

(although free) would be by ticket only, for *responsible persons*, on the first and third monday of the month.

After having invested so much time, money and effort in enclosing the Thicket and transforming Leigh Park, Stone surprisingly decided to leave it in 1874. His political opponents claimed that this was done in a fit of pique after he lost his seat in the General Election of January that year, but whatever the real reason by October it had been put up for auction.

The vendor enjoys the sole right of sporting over the entire estate. New tracks and rides have been made through the Thicket.

proclaimed the auctioneer's sales catalogue. A bathing pool had also been created amongst the trees to the north-east of the Lake. Stone had truly transformed the Thicket into a private playground.

The estate was purchased by Sir Frederick Fitzwygram, and Leigh Park remained in the Fitzwygram family until 1944, when it was acquired by Portsmouth City Council. Most of the land, of course, was destined for housing, but the gardens, grounds and Thicket were all retained as open spaces and in 1987 became the Staunton Country Park.

Today the Thicket is truly unenclosed and free to be enjoyed by all.

The Early History of the Leigh Park Estate – Steve Jones

This brief history is mainly concerned with the development of what became Leigh House and later known as the Leigh Park Estate so a good starting point is the Hearth Tax assessment of 1665 which records 24 households in the tithing of Leigh. Leigh at this stage was a large tithing within the Manor and Parish of Havant bordering on Bedhampton to the west, Rowlands Castle and Durrants to the north east, Warblington to the south-east and Havant to the south.

What is interesting to us is that Robert Higgins was paying tax on three hearths, meaning a house of modest size. Robert Higgins was also paying hearth tax at his house at Leigh in 1673 and 1674. Unfortunately, apart from this description there are no further details of the house at this time. The house and land appears to have stayed within the Higgins family until 20 April 1767 when under a Bond of Indemnity a:

Messuage, barn, gateroom, and three closes (nine acres), parcel of one messuage and one yardland of bondland in Leigh, parcel of the Manor of Havant. The premises are to be purchased by Charles Webber, Leigh, Havant on the death of George Higgins, great uncle of Francis Higgins, butcher, St Anns Soho, Middlesex. HRO102M86/196.



Leigh Farmhouse circa 1832. *Joseph Francis Gilbert.*

Not a great deal of information is known regarding the Higgins family at Leigh but a transcribed document for a Court Baron (A manorial court which enforced the customs of the manor. It was the property of the lord and a private jurisdiction) held 23 October 1756 gives a little more information on the Higgins family. The Court Baron had met to discuss the copyhold land at Leigh in the hands of the Higgins family after the death of John Higgins in 1758. John Higgins had been admitted to the copyhold during the lifetime of his father Francis Higgins, Yeoman of Leigh, his father being appointed guardian as he was under age at a Court held on 25 October 1711. Francis Higgins died in December 1736 and at a Court on 21 October 1737 his widow Joan was admitted to her 'Freebench' (where a widow could retain tenure of her late husband's land) with the reversion to her son John Higgins at her death, which occurred in April 1742 The copyhold appears to be that held by Robert Higgins in the 1673 and 1674 Hearth Tax Returns. (*The Court Book of Havant*, No. 8, 1754). 99 HRO 124/M71/M7 (transcription). In the will of John Higgins he records:

I give my copyhold land and all the Buildings belong to the land to Francis Higgins son of my nephew Francis Higgins to him and his heirs for ever and never to be sold, he is not to have the rents of the said lands until he is one and twenty years of age. HRO 124/M71/M7.

The other interesting information regarding the Higgins family is that certain members followed the Catholic faith, including Francis Higgins who is recorded in an Enrolment Book containing the names and estates of papists registered under the Act of George I (1715), Easter 1717 – Michaelmas 1746. *HRO 1758P/17*. In the book Francis Higgins is recorded as of Leigh, Havant, yeoman: copyhold messuage, appurtenances, and 28 acres at Leigh, Havant. This is borne out in the record of the Bishop of Winchester's official visit to Havant 1725 that there are *50 papists of no great consequence*, said to meet frequently at Middle Leigh in the parish of Havant with several others.

Certainly members of the family were Catholics as records for the Brockhampton Roman Catholic Chapel testify but other members of the family were either, baptised, married or buried, at St Faith's Church and other local churches.

When the 'Reversionary Rights (The return of the rights of possession to the lessor, in this instance to the lord of the manor, at the expiration of a lease) of a Copyhold Estate' at Leigh was surrendered to Captain Charles Webber in 1767 for the sum of £340 it is unclear if it was still the house first recorded in the Hearth Tax Assessment in 1664 or another house that had been built in the ensuing years. Certainly in the early years of his ownership it does appear that Webber made Leigh House his main residence as four of his children were baptised in the parish church of St Faith in Havant.

Webber died in London on 23 May 1783 and his estate at Leigh passed to his wife Anne who 'surrendered' the estate to Samuel Harrison of Chichester. It has to be mentioned that most of the land that made up the estate was copyhold to the Manor of Havant and under the ownership of the Bishop of Winchester or whoever he sublet the manor to at the time, which meant that certain payments were made and the tenant 'surrendered' the land back to the lord who transferred it to the new tenant.

Samuel Harrison is a bit of an enigma when it comes to the history of the Leigh Park Estate. He certainly left his mark on the estate because between the years 1783 and 1792 he built a new house on the site, or very close to the site of the old house of the Higgins family and Charles Webber. The new house was built in a pleasing yellow brick, along with the requisite outbuildings and walled garden, of which some still survive. Apart from this, and he being elected in 1783 a member of the Hambledon Cricket Club, no further information on him can be found.

On 21 September 1792 Harrison surrendered his holdings at Leigh to the then Captain Thomas Lenox Frederick. Frederick also acquired further freehold land close to Leigh House at Upper Durrants and around Leigh Farm House. At this period the area around Leigh House was either under the tenure of small copyholders, in some cases many only holding an acre or two of land from the lord of the manor. The main

landowner was Joseph Franklin of Qualletts Grove (later renamed Merchistoun Hall), Horndean, who held over 220 acres of land at Leigh, including Leigh Farmhouse. The map of 1792-1800 clearly shows the land Frederick held. Interestingly, the land at Upper Durrants (measuring approx. 14 acres) acquired by Frederick later became part of the Leigh Estate under William Garrett and then Sir George Staunton. Under Staunton the Beacon Folly, which still stands, was erected there. Further land acquired by Frederick was to the south of the mansion at Front Lawn. In total Frederick's holdings at Leigh amounted to 22 acres.

At the time of the death of Rear-Admiral Thomas Lenox Frederick in October 1799 the estate at Leigh and other land close by had already been 'surrendered' to his wife Anne due to his wishes. In his will he *devises his estate and, by his codicils, his reversionary interest in four copyhold estates, parcel of the Manor of Havant to his wife Anne*. It would appear that Frederick let the property rather than live there permanently, prior to his death the house was occupied by his tenant John Allan. It was Anne Frederick, who in January 1800 sold the Leigh House estate for the price of £480 to William Garrett.

In 1797 William Garrett (1762-1831) married Amelia Newland (1769-1847), daughter of James Newland and brother of Richard Bingham Newland (1768-1826), lord of the manor of Havant. Richard Bingham Newland inherited the lease of the manor of Havant in 1765 after the death of his brother James who died aged nine in that year. Further leases were granted to Richard Bingham Newland on 6 April 1775 and 14 April 1784. The manor had been passed to the young boys by their great uncle John Moody at the time of his death in 1864.



Leigh House, 1833, painted by Joseph Francis Gilbert for Sir George Thomas Staunton Bt.

The core of the house built by Samuel Harrison still remained but William Garrett and Sir George Staunton both made alterations and extensions to the house with the addition of a colonnade, conservatory, and the existing library.

The original walled garden was probably laid out by Samuel Harrison when he built his house, 1783-92. The garden was later realigned by Sir George Staunton and the large stove house built by Staunton replaced an earlier hot house which stood there.

The addition to the House since 1819 consist of a library, corridor, and bath room; a clock tower, a spare coach-house and harness room, with a servants' bed-room over; and several successive enlargements of the conservatory, the extent of which of which has been increased from thirty feet by thirty, to sixty feet by forty.

Notices of the Leigh Park Estate, 1836

William Garrett and the Birth of the Leigh Park Estate

Steve Jones

William Garrett came from a well-known Portsmouth family; his father, Daniel, was a Portsmouth brewer and owner of the Belmont Estate at nearby Bedhampton, while his brother Vice Admiral Henry Garrett was Governor of the Military Hospital at Haslar. Another brother, George, who was knighted in 1820, later inherited the family brewing business. William was baptised at St Thomas Church, Portsmouth on 22 August 1762, the eldest son of Daniel and Elizabeth Norris.

Daniel Garrett was taken into partnership by his father-in-law William Norris. Of William Garrett's siblings his eldest sister Mary Longhurst Garrett (1763-98) married Admiral John Child Purvis in 1790. This was Admiral Purvis's second marriage. Daniel Garrett (1766-1839), a Customs Officer married Eleanor Martha Raikes, the daughter of Robert Raikes, a newspaper proprietor and advocate of Sunday Schools, in 1797. Vice Admiral Henry Garrett (1762-1831) married Mary Raikes, the daughter of Robert Raikes and sister of Eleanor Martha Raikes, in 1796. Sir George Garrett (1772-1832) married in 1796 Louisa Harriett Pierce. Elizabeth Garrett, baptised 1768 died unmarried at Bath in 1818.

It was William Garrett, together with his father who formed the 'Loyal Portsmouth Garrison Company of Volunteer Infantry' in June 1798, at a time when passions were running high due to the French and especially Napoleon Bonaparte's intentions of invasion. The British Government at the end of the eighteenth century was concerned by the very real possibility of a French invasion. The events in revolutionary France in 1792 caused concern and war with France was inevitable. We have seen earlier the part Captain Thomas Lenox Frederick played at Toulon and at the battle of St Vincent and further tensions in Britain were running high.

In April 1794 an Act was passed, limited to the duration of the war, authorising the formation of Voluntary Corps for the defence of the kingdom. As a result two Companies were raised in Hampshire, one in Havant, the 'Havant Company of Volunteers'. Modification of the Act in 1798 resulted in a larger number of Volunteer Corps being created, including the 'Loyal Portsmouth Garrison Company of Volunteer Infantry' under William Garrett.

Certainly the Garrett men-folk played their part with the volunteer corps, William's brother, Sir George Garrett, was also a captain in the Portsmouth Royal Garrison Volunteers. William also later played a large part as a Major in the formation of the 'Loyal Havant Volunteers' (1803 – 1809) after his move to Leigh.

The Garrett's took their involvement with the Volunteer corps seriously; soon after their formation on the 16 August 1798, the volunteer corps was inspected by Major General Thomas Murray of the Town Garrison. In Murray's report he stated that under Major William Garrett there was dignity of this elevated office, with the highest credit to himself, and the most essential service to the county... The report went on to say:

The whole have the complete use of their Arms, March, Wheel and Fire well. Much merit is due to Major Garrett not only for his having brought his company in so complete a state of discipline in the short space of ten weeks; but also for having furnished good clothing and accoutrements at his sole expense; besides Major Garrett will not accept from Government any of the usual pecuniary allowance for the Daily Exercise. The whole company appear to be very zealous and attentive; and may be of great use should their services be required.

Leigh Park – A 19th Century Pleasure Ground, Derek Gladwyn

Two other episodes regarding the volunteer corps stand out; firstly on 29 May 1799, corps under the command of Major William Garrett, attended service at the Garrison Church, after which they were drawn up in front of the Governor's house and presented with colours by Mrs Amelia Garrett. These colours now hang in the chancel of St Thomas's Church, now Portsmouth Cathedral.

The second report shows the patriotic fervour of the time. On 4 June 1801 some six to eight thousand men from the 23 volunteer corps assembled on Portsdown Hill on the occasion of the King's birthday. The troops formed a line over two miles in length and included the following local volunteer corps with their respective commanders:

Portsdown Cavalry	Hon. Col. Henry Hood
Petersfield Cavalry	Capt. Catery
Bere Forest Rangers	Capt. Moody
Havant Volunteers	Capt. John Butler

Emsworth Volunteers	Capt. Robert Harfield
Finchdean Volunteers	Hon. Col. Henry Hood
Hambledon Volunteers	Col. Palmer
Portchester Volunteers	Capt. Holmwood
Gosport Artillery Volunteers	Capt. Goodeve
Gosport Volunteers 1st Corps	Capt. T. Whitcomb
Gosport Volunteers 2nd Corps	Capt. T. Whitcomb
Gosport Riflemen	Capt. March
Portsmouth Volunteers	Col. Arnaud
Royal Artificers	Col. Eveleigh
Portsmouth Artillery Volunteers	Capt. Mottley
Portsea Volunteers	Capt. Baker
Royal Portsmouth Garrison Volunteers ..	Major William Garrett

Illustrated History of Portsmouth, W.G. Gates, Portsmouth, 1900.

The Volunteer Corps consisted at this time of 1 Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 1 Ensign, 1 Adjutant, 6 Sergeants, 6 Corporals, 9 Drummers and Fifers, and 120 Privates.

The spectacle of the different volunteer units spread out along Portsdown Hill must have been a sight to behold; Major General Whitelocke, Lt Governor of the Garrison in Portsmouth, inspected the troops and an extract from his report, printed in the *Hampshire Telegraph* records:

Major General Whitelocke had so much reason to be satisfied with the conduct of the Regiments and Volunteer Corps that composed the line on Portsdown Hill yesterday, that he feels it incumbent on him to express in this way, not only his warm approbation of their military appearance, and quickness in performing the business of the day, but also of their animated zeal to manifest their attachment to the best of king.

Hampshire Telegraph, 9 June 1800

On 25 September 1787 at St Faith's Church, William Garrett married Amelia Newland, the daughter of James Newland, an attorney of Havant and Ann, his wife. It is believed the couple made their home in Portsmouth until moving to Leigh House in 1800. William's marriage and his connections to the Bingham-Newland family would help enormously in his future dealings with the development of the Leigh Estate. Amelia's brother, Richard Bingham Newland, inherited the lease of the Manor of Havant due to the connections with the Moody family who held the lease from the Bishops of Winchester for many years.

The Manor of Havant was in possession of the Bishops of Winchester till 1553 when it was leased out to Sir Richard Cotton. It was leased out until 1826 when it was acquired outright by Sir George Staunton and subsequently owned by the

owners of the Leigh Park Estate. The Manor of Flood lies wholly in the Parish of Havant, extending from the borders of the Thicket into the town of Havant.

In January 1800, William Garrett acquired from Ann Frederick, the wife of the late Admiral Thomas Lenox Frederick, Leigh House and the freehold land held by Frederick at Leigh for £480. At the same time his brother-in-law Richard Bingham Newland conveyed the copyhold land at Leigh to him.

In February 1801 Garrett was made Sherriff for the County of Southampton, as Hampshire was known as at that time. The *Hampshire Telegraph* announced the appointment in their edition for the 16 February:

We are as much pleased to observe the name of Major Garrett, of Leigh House, and who is commander of the Royal Garrison Volunteers, announced as Sheriff of this county for the ensuing year. The loyalty of his principles, and the firm attachment he has ever evinced to our constitution, joined to the liberality and patriotism he has, in all instances, shewn in support of the Voluntary forces, are unequivocal pledges of his maintaining the honour and dignity of this elevated office, with the highest credit to himself, and the most essential service to the county, in guarding all its criminal, civil, and municipal laws, from abuse in their execution, and most vigilantly protecting its place, social order, and property, at this very important crisis.

In 1802 Garrett had Leigh House substantially rebuilt and enlarged, employing the Southampton architect John Kent. It is unclear what exactly the work was that was carried out to the house that differed from the house that Harrison built between 1783 and 1792, certainly later maps show the house much larger than the building on the plan of 1792-1800. The only description of Leigh House during the occupation of William Garrett is from the sales particulars of 1819 when the estate was acquired by Sir George Thomas Staunton. In the sales particulars an overview is given of the house as:

The House is most judiciously planned, substantially built, the architectural decorations chaste and highly finished, marked by peculiar elegance in the design, and a particular attention to unite comfort and convenience, in the higher, as well as the subordinate arrangement of every domestic office, and in every respect calculated for a large or moderate Establishment.

As well as enlarging the house Garrett set about acquiring the land in the vicinity of the house, and by 1807 he had acquired all of Franklin's land, over 200 acres, reputedly for the large sum of £4,600. Over the next few years he acquired further land in the area turning the Leigh Estate into one of the largest in the neighbourhood.

It must be remembered that most of the land around Leigh at this time was in the hands of the Bishop of Winchester, who granted the lease of the Manor of Havant to a

succession of Havant worthies. These included Richard Cotton of Warblington Castle (in 1553) and later the Moody family. In April 1784 a new lease was granted to Richard Bingham Newland, who as Lord of the Manor began to dispose of parts of the manor. In 1812 Newland conveyed the lease of the Manor of Havant to his brother-in-law William Garrett for the sum of £2,878. This connection with the Lord of the Manor held Garrett in good stead in his plan to acquire the copyhold land around the Leigh Estate.

It was Garrett who played a major part in developing the estate; certainly parts of the estate bear his mark today. He landscaped the grounds and parkland around the house, fenced off the park and extended it to 400 acres; converting the farm to a '*ferme ornée*' (ornamental farm) and laid the framework for the landscaping by Staunton that was to follow. By the time of the sale to Staunton in December 1819, along with other land purchases, the estate had grown in size to comprise 828 customary acres. A customary acre was a measure of land often used in early documents, which could vary from one manor to another. In Havant, as in a number of other manors in south-east Hampshire, the customary acre was about two-thirds of a statute acre.

The farmhouse and buildings were incorporated into the estate by William Garrett after he acquired the land close to Leigh House. The present farmhouse site was much altered by first William Garrett and later by Sir George Staunton after he acquired the estate in 1819. The farmhouse itself dates from about 1800 to 1833 and is probably one of the oldest buildings remaining on the estate and is a Grade II listed building along with the farm buildings which pre date this back further. The plan of 1792-1800 records the farmhouse on an east-west alignment but later maps from 1833 show it on a north-south alignment suggesting that a new farmhouse was built or the old one much altered by either William Garrett or Sir George Staunton. A watercolour painting commissioned by Staunton in around 1833 shows the farmhouse in its new position. Unfortunately, no recorded evidence of a new farmhouse being built during Garrett or Staunton's ownership exists. Staunton was meticulous in recording all the new building work carried out during his tenure at Leigh Park and no record of a new farmhouse can be found suggesting that alterations were possibly made to the old farmhouse building.

By September 1803, Garrett had relinquished control of the Royal Garrison Volunteers and was now in command of the 'Loyal Havant Volunteers', which on 17 October 1803 the *Hampshire Telegraph* reported: *The Havant Volunteers commanded by Major Garrett have completed their clothing; they are a fine body of men and will attend divine service at the parish church on Wednesday in their regimentals.*

Interestingly Garrett himself put £100 towards the clothing for the corps and many from the town contributed subscriptions towards the cause.

The Loyal Havant Volunteers by December 1803 had three companies of 63 men each, one field officer, two captains, six subalterns, three staff officers, nine sergeants, nine corporals, and three drummers. Originally the Havant Volunteers were under the command of Captain John Butler and were one of the two oldest companies in Hampshire. In 1804 the Loyal Havant Volunteers and the Emsworth Infantry Volunteers were united under the title of the 'Havant and Emsworth Loyal Volunteers' under the command of Major William Garrett. On 21 August 1809 the volunteers paraded for the last time and the corps disbanded. The Loyal Havant Volunteers colours were repaired in 1957 and can be seen in St Faith's Church in Havant.

In May 1817, due to possibly family matters, his mother and unmarried sister Elizabeth had moved to Bath where he eventually died, Garrett negotiated the sale of the Leigh Estate to John Julius Angerstein (1735-1823). Angerstein, of Russian extraction, came to England when he was 15 and eventually became influential in the establishing of Lloyd's of London. He also became a financial advisor to William Pitt, the Prime Minister. Legend has it that Angerstein was the natural son of either the Empress Anne of Russia or Elizabeth Petrovna, the illegitimate daughter of Peter the Great.

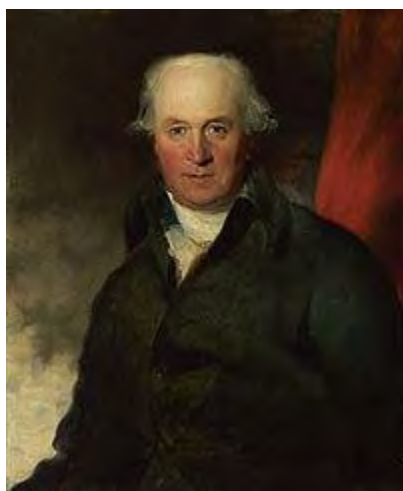
It appears that Angerstein quickly moved into Leigh House and in October 1817 even applied for permission to erect a gallery in St Faith's Church for himself and his family. In November 1817 Angerstein even obtained opinion upon the right of sporting over the Havant Thicket:

The qualified copyholders have no right to enter on the Lord's waste, except for the purpose of driving their cattle to and from pasture; and if, in so doing, they go one step out of their way for the purpose of sporting, they commit a trespass; and if they do so after notice, they will be liable to him in action, as wilful trespassers.

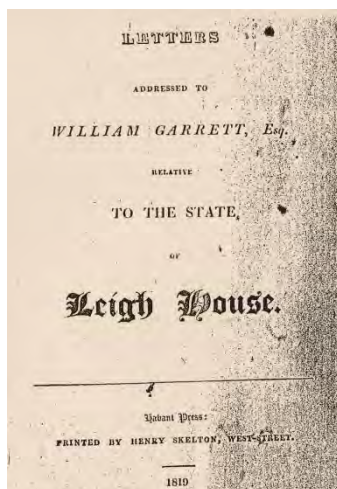
Leigh Park – A 19th Century Pleasure Ground, Derek Gladwyn

By the summer of 1818 a contract had finally been signed for the purchase of Leigh House and estate for the astronomical sum of £47,350. Unfortunately things began to go wrong; Angerstein brought a case against Garrett for not disclosing dry rot in the house. The case was heard in London in February 1819 and the charges dismissed, but Angerstein was not compelled to complete the purchase. He was an avid art collector and after his death in 1823 the Government paid £57,000 for 58 of Angerstein's pictures and a further £3,000 for the continued tenancy of his London home in Pall Mall, so it could be opened as an art gallery. This was the beginning of what would become the National Gallery.

Unfortunately for the ruling of the court case it still left Garrett with Leigh House and later in the year of 1819 he again put the estate up for sale. This time Garrett, with the aid of Chichester land agent and auctioneer Samuel Weller, had a pamphlet published entitled: *Letters addressed to William Garrett, Esq., Relative to the state of Leigh House*. This pamphlet, as well as asserting the sound condition of Leigh House has letters from 20 worthy gentry, builders, and local craftsmen of the area; signatories to the letters included Revd M.A. Norris (Rector of Warblington), Charles Longcroft, Admiral Sir Henry Leeke of West Leigh House, Sir Samuel Clarke Jervoise of Idsworth, Admiral Sir Lucius Curtis of Gatcombe House, all stating to the sound condition of the property.



John Julius Angerstein, 1790,
by Thomas Lawrence.



Cover of the pamphlet produced in 1819 on
the sound condition of Leigh House.

HAVING, by permission of William Garrett, Esq. minutely examined the timbers and other wood-work of Leigh House, we the undersigned do most solemnly declare, that we did not discover any symptoms whatever of the dry rot in any of them, that the floor boards, skirtings, and story posts, (as supports to the girders in the cellars) were as sound and perfect as when new, and the decay perceptible on the under surface and edges only, of some of the joists and girders, was occasioned for want of circulation of air, usual in all cellars where the air is excluded, and it did not proceed from the disease called dry rot.

That we took particular notice of the roof and found that is was most substantial and firmly fixed, not only upon the outer and inner walls, but on

two strong middle or party walls, which carry thye chimnies, and from the nature of its construction it must be a remarkable dry house.

As witness our hands, this 16th day of June, 1810.

RICE SHARPLEY. RICHARD SHARPLEY.

Example of one of the letters by local builders and craftsmen on the state of Leigh House sent to William Garrett, Esq. A footnote in the letters reads:

Mr Rice Sharpley, having been 60 years a practical builder, thirteen of which he was chief foreman to the late Sir Robert Taylor, and built Purbrook House, and several other mansions, under that eminent Architect, is well acquainted with the state and condition of houses and buildings, and particularly with the nature and character of the disease in timber called dry rot. Mr Sharpley came to Leigh, without being sent for, accompanied by his son, who has also had above a 30-year experience as a builder.

A fine description of the house and estate at this period was recorded by Walter Butler, possibly the Steward to the estate, in 1817, in his *Topographical Account of the History of the Hundred of Bosmere*:

Leigh House has always attracted the notice of strangers from the peculiar neatness of its appearance, its forest scenery, and its rich and interesting views of the sea. It stands upon a gentle eminence in a park of four hundred acres of hill and dale, ornamented with timber and plantations. All that wealth could command, or art supply, has contributed to embellish the beautiful domain. The house is substantially built, neatly finished, and comprises every comfort and conveniency in its domestic arrangements. The shrubberies are laid out with taste; and from its numerous wood walks, at different points, are seen many interesting objects of the neighbourhood. The view of Havant Thicket from the hermitage, clad with ivy, upon the mount is of a more sedate kind, highly interesting from its deep shade in summer, its beautiful tints in autumn, and serving as a contrast to the more brilliant views of the sea and its islands. The gardens are planned with great judgement, and furnished with pinery, hot-house, green-houses and stoves, and surrounded with shrubberies and walks communicating in all directions. The farm buildings, dairy embellished with old china, and pheasantry adjoining, are detached from the mansion, and contribute by their nice arrangement to render the estate one of the most delightful residences in the country.

The above description of the estate shows how far Garrett had transformed the house, park and garden from its smaller origins under Harrison and Frederick. It also shows that Garrett was certainly a man of wealth because creating one of the most

delightful residences in the country as he did did not come cheap. So what do we know of Garrett's park and garden? Certain elements survived under Staunton, it is clear that the Dutch Garden and Swiss Wood House, survived under Staunton, as did the Cone House, painted by Joseph Francis Gilbert in 1832. It has even been suggested that an Indian Temple was in existence at the time of the sale to Staunton in 1819. Certainly greenhouses and hothouses survived under Staunton but it is difficult to gauge what survived under Staunton's re-development of the park and gardens as he appeared to start from a fresh canvas in creating his own 'masterpiece'.

Certainly one feature which did not survive under Staunton is Garrett's Hermitage. Butler describes it as clad in ivy from the mount and giving a view from it of Havant Thicket. The location of it we can only surmise; one possible site could have been the Temple site overlooking Leigh Water, the highest point of the estate with Havant Thicket in the background. This location later became the site of William Stone's new Leigh Park House. Other suggestions have included High Lawn or High Field which again would give views towards Havant Thicket.

The 1819 sales particulars leave us with a good description of the estate under Garratt and hold testimony to the work he put into creating his own early nineteenth-century pleasure ground, they included:

Productive Gardens, Green, Pinery and Succession Houses, Melon Grounds, with pleasant and extensive shrubberies. A Baliff's House, an ornamental Dairy, with seventeen cottages. The Agricultural Buildings are peculiarly complete, and the whole of the Lands present a perfect ferme ornée. This singularly unique and delightful House is situated on a pleasing eminence, in a paled park of upwards of 420 acres, commanding a peculiar richness of home landscape and forest scenery, with a fine view of Spithead, the Isle of Wight and St Helens; most delightful drives and walks through all the coppices, of considerable extent, with seats, and many of the enclosures are margined by walks. The Stables are inclosed all round, a spacious Yard, a two stalled stable, a six stalled Stable etc. Harness Room and two Carriage Houses, for five Carriages, with other stabling for Post Horses, and Horses at Grass.

It is also recorded in the local press that Garrett lived *in considerable state and that he entertained parties of cricketers, being himself a cricketer of some fame besides being thoroughly well versed in field sports of all sorts*. It was probably on the common at Stockheath that cricket was played, certainly the Havant team played matches there. Later of course Leigh Park had its own pitch at Front Lawn. With reference to field sports Havant Thicket was frequented by deer, woodcock and snipe and Walter Butler records a grouse being shot there in 1800. Garrett also kept a pheasantry at

Leigh which, in November 1813 was broken into and as the *Hampshire Telegraph* reported *nine handsome pheasants were stolen*. It must be said that the culprits were taking a chance as by this time Garrett was also acting as a magistrate for the Fareham District of Hampshire which in judicial law at this time Havant was part of.



The Cone House, built by William Garrett after 1800 and incorporated into Staunton's garden design. *Painted by Joseph Francis Gilbert, 1832.*

At the end of July 1819, Sir George Staunton paid his first visit to Leigh Park with the view of buying the property and was conducted around the estate by Garrett. The only disappointment that Staunton found was that the road from Havant to Horndean passed close to the front of the house, but Staunton was duly impressed enough to agree to the purchase. In September 1819 agreements were formally signed for Staunton to become the next owner of the estate and on 30 December of that year the ownership of the estate was finally sealed for the purchase price of £22,000.

William Garrett and his wife, Amelia moved permanently to Bath after the sale of the Leigh Estate, Garrett dying their aged sixty-nine on 28 December 1831. His address was given at the time as The Crescent, Bath, and Marine Parade, Brighton. Amelia died in 1847. The Garrett's were never blessed with any children; a child had been stillborn in August 1804.

In conclusion, the Leigh Park Estate went through substantial changes after the sale by William Garrett to Sir George Staunton, Staunton enlarged and embellished the estate and under him it became one of the foremost gardens and parkland in this

part of the country. Staunton even acquired the Manor of Havant outright from the Bishop of Winchester for the sum of £2,075 1s. 9d. (£2,075.09) in 1826. Later, after the death of Staunton, William Stone built another house overlooking the lake and demolished the earlier house, and with this the whole of the aspect of the estate changed again. But what remains is enough evidence of the early estate under Harrison, Frederick and Garrett, with even glimpses of what was there before them when we look at the fine farm buildings that remain.



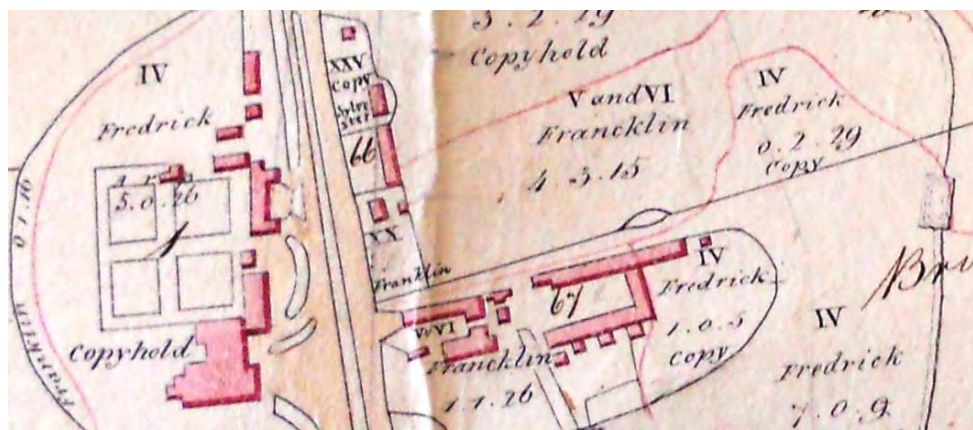
The first Leigh Park House from an 1854 engraving by William Pink.



The Old Stove House and Greenhouses, built by William Garrett, 1800-19. This Stove House was later demolished and replaced with a larger structure by Sir George Staunton. Painted by Joseph Francis Gilbert in 1832.



The Head Gardener's Cottage, formerly Silvester Cottage, a building which stood on the former main road from Havant to Horndean. It was taken into the estate by William Garrett after 1800. *Painted by Joseph Francis Gilbert, 1832.*



Map of Leigh and Leigh House, 1792-1800, showing the small Leigh Estate and the land held by Frederick at this time. The land held by Frederick close to Leigh Farm and the farm buildings still survive. Also shown is the walled garden, later realigned by Sir George Staunton, the coach-house, stables and bothy which all still remain. The road from Havant to Horndean can be seen dissecting Leigh House from the farm. In 1828 Sir George Staunton had the road moved to the other side of the farm buildings as shown below.



Portion of the 1842 Tithe Map of the Leigh Park Estate showing Leigh Park House and Farm under Sir George Staunton.



The second Leigh Park House. Built in 1865 and demolished in 1959.



The second Leigh Park House and the Chinese bridge.



Leigh farm buildings, 2008.



Leigh Farmhouse after restoration, circa 2000.



The boat house.



Ashling maypole dancers at Leigh Park.



Skating on the frozen lake circa 1910.



Royal Naval Barracks outing to Naval Widows and Orphans at Leigh Park 30 July 1915.



Sunday school outing.



Sir Frederick Fitzwygram's pack of hare-hunting beagle hounds.



Sir George Staunton rebuilt Garrett's Stove House and Greenhouses to the replica design seen today in the walled garden.



The stables and Bothy Cottage



The Bothy and stables.



Side view of the former coach house and stables to Leigh House, built sometime around 1783.

Romano-British and Saxon Commons: The evidence from Leigh, Havant.

John Pile

The mediaeval hamlet of Leigh occupied a ridge of gently rising ground between 70 and 100 feet (21 and 30 m) above Ordnance Datum. To the west the tributaries of the Hermitage Stream drain the clay lands of Havant Thicket; to the east lies the valley of the Lavant Brook; and to the north the ground drops steeply to Durrants and Redhill. Havant, until recently a small market town, lies on the coastal plain, about 1½ miles (2.5 km) to the south. The site of Leigh, which had been occupied intermittently since Mesolithic times, was provided with a reliable supply of water both from shallow wells sunk into the gravels overlying the impermeable London Clay, and from the springs that issued from the junction between these two geological formations.¹

Leigh also benefited from the varied resources offered by the many soil types and contrasting locations within its surrounding area.² Leigh lies on the London Clay at the extreme eastern edge of the Hampshire Basin. The London Clay together with the sands and clays of the Reading Beds immediately to the north, comprise the underlying geology of the Forest of Bere and its surrounding commons. These mainly damp and heavy clays provided the timber and underwood required for building, for agricultural equipment, fences and gates, and the fuel for domestic and industrial purposes. The extensive common wood-pastures also provided pannage for pigs and grazing for cattle and horses. Although often difficult to drain and to bring into cultivation, the more tractable areas of the London Clay close to the settlement yielded arable land of a reasonable quality, but most of the common arable fields lay on the valley gravels immediately to the south and east of Leigh. The water meadows along the valley of the Lavant Brook provided both rich pastures and the important hay crops in their respective seasons. All these resources were available to the tenants of Leigh as part of the Bishop of Winchester's manor of Havant, but beyond these limits to the north lay the South Downs, the lower slopes and valleys of which provided good crops of wheat, barley and rye, whilst the chalk hills were sheep country *par excellence*. The landlord and tenants of Leigh may not have benefited directly from the produce of the country beyond its manorial boundaries, but the valley of the Lavant formed a natural route by which some of this produce would find a market in Havant.

The origins of the mediaeval hamlet and tithing of Leigh are difficult to determine. The earliest known documentary reference to *la Lye*, Old English **lēah**, occurs in 1236, but as **lēah** means both 'wood' and 'clearing', its sense in this instance is uncertain. Margaret Gelling has demonstrated that the element **lēah** was sometimes used as a habitation term with the meaning of a settlement in a woodland

environment,³ and Richard Coates agrees that Leigh may have been the 'clearing-settlement' within a tract of ancient woodland.⁴ As **lēah** was in use as a name-forming element at least since the 7th century A.D. and continued to be used to form place-names well after the Norman conquest, the place-name alone is of little value in determining the origin of the settlement.⁵

Two Anglo-Saxon charters of 935 (S 430) and 980 (S 837) contain almost identical boundary clauses defining an estate that was probably very similar in extent and outline to the post-Conquest manor of Havant and, subsequently, the ecclesiastical parish.⁶ The Anglo-Saxon bounds skirt the site of Leigh, but it would appear from the descriptions of the boundary points in this area that although we are in a generally wooded environment, we cannot be far from a settlement. Two trackways are indicated: the 'eastern highway', apparently running north-westward towards Horndean from somewhere near Redhill (possibly the *(on) Lamhyrstæ* of the charter), and the 'straight way' (S 837) or 'ridgeway' (S 430) running southward from Rowlands Castle to Whichers Gate. The hedge (or enclosure) of the *lwwara*, 'the people of the yew', may refer to part of Idsworth tithing; and *(on) herredes leage*, '(to) Herred's wood or clearing' probably lay to the north of Bartons Cross, either on the Warblington side or the Havant side of the boundary. The *lid geat*, 'swing gate', was probably in the vicinity of the BUPA [now Spire] hospital in Bartons Road and it may have been the entrance to the common pasture from the arable land to the south. This identification is supported by the fact that subsequent boundary marks are individual trees, which are less likely to have been used for the purpose in a wooded environment.

A similar transition from open to wooded country occurs on the western side of the Anglo-Saxon estate where the bounds move from an open to a predominantly wooded environment to the north of Stockheath, the present common being a 'relic' exit-funnel from a block of common pasture that stretched across the estate from one side to the other.⁷ This impression is strengthened by the fact that Leigh Green appears to have been another former exit-funnel issuing from the common pasture into a driveway now represented by New Lane. A continuous stretch of common pasture may therefore be envisaged extending west from Emsworth Common to include Bedhampton Park, which was probably formed by Hugh de Port, the lord of the manor of Bedhampton in 1086.⁸ The exit-funnel from the park, which is clearly indicated on the Bedhampton tithe map, was probably a feature of the pre-Conquest common. If this interpretation is correct, it suggests that this area of common wood-pasture was the **lēah**, the woodland site of the mediaeval hamlet of *la Lye*, and that the settlement had not been founded by 980 A.D. The inconclusive nature of the place-name evidence for the foundation of Leigh has already been mentioned, but the fact that 95 sherds of pottery from an excavation close to the centre of the settlement

were dated by Chris Currie to the 12th to 14th century seems to support the view that it may have been in existence by c.1200 A.D.⁹ References to Leigh in the Winchester Pipe Rolls; post-mediaeval court rolls, and estate maps enable some twelve villein messuages and twenty cottagers holdings to be identified, although possibly not all were occupied at any one time. The 1665 hearth tax assessment confirms this general picture as there were then twenty-four dwellings in the tithing of Leigh containing a total of fifty-three hearths.¹⁰ The hamlet survived until the early 19th century (although it was probably shrinking by this time), when Sir George Staunton sealed its fate by buying out the remaining freeholds and copyholds to enlarge his park and create a model farm. Only a few properties were suffered to remain where they did not impinge on Sir George's grand design.¹¹

During the Romano-British period, a settlement, the 'proto-Havant', developed on the 1st century road from Chichester to Winchester *via* Wickham where it passed close to the Homewell spring. This development was followed by the construction of a branch road from the centre of Havant to Rowlands Castle, and possibly another to Hayling Island *via* a wadeway across the Langstone Channel.¹² The settlement at Havant occupied an ideal position for a market centre dealing in salt, fish, shellfish and wildfowl from the sea and marshes to the south; grain and market garden produce from the fertile coastal plain; cattle, pigs and hides from the forests and wood-pastures to the north; pottery from the Rowlands Castle kilns, and wool and sheep from the Downs beyond.¹³

Figure 1 shows the known Romano-British sites in Havant and Leigh, the distribution of which is clearly related to the roads. The villas at Langstone and Bedhampton have been excavated, but that at Warblington is known only through chance finds.¹⁴ Many of the other finds, especially those of pottery and building materials, must also indicate occupation of some kind. A site at Oak Park by the side of the Lavant Brook and close to the branch road from Havant, for example, was excavated in 1992 and revealed several ditches and associated 2nd and 3rd century pottery.¹⁵ Further north and also on the branch road a concentration of sites and find-spots occurs at Leigh where the Romano-British farmstead was excavated in 1968 and 1970.¹⁶ Further north still, close to the road and the Lavant Brook, at Mays Coppice Farm, an extensive pottery production site, probably in use between the late 1st and the late 3rd centuries, has been known for many years. Recent studies by Ian Hodder, following some excavations by Margaret Rule in 1963, demonstrated that the coarse-wares were distributed both to villages and farmsteads in the Downs around Chalton, and to Fishbourne and Chichester and its hinterland.¹⁷

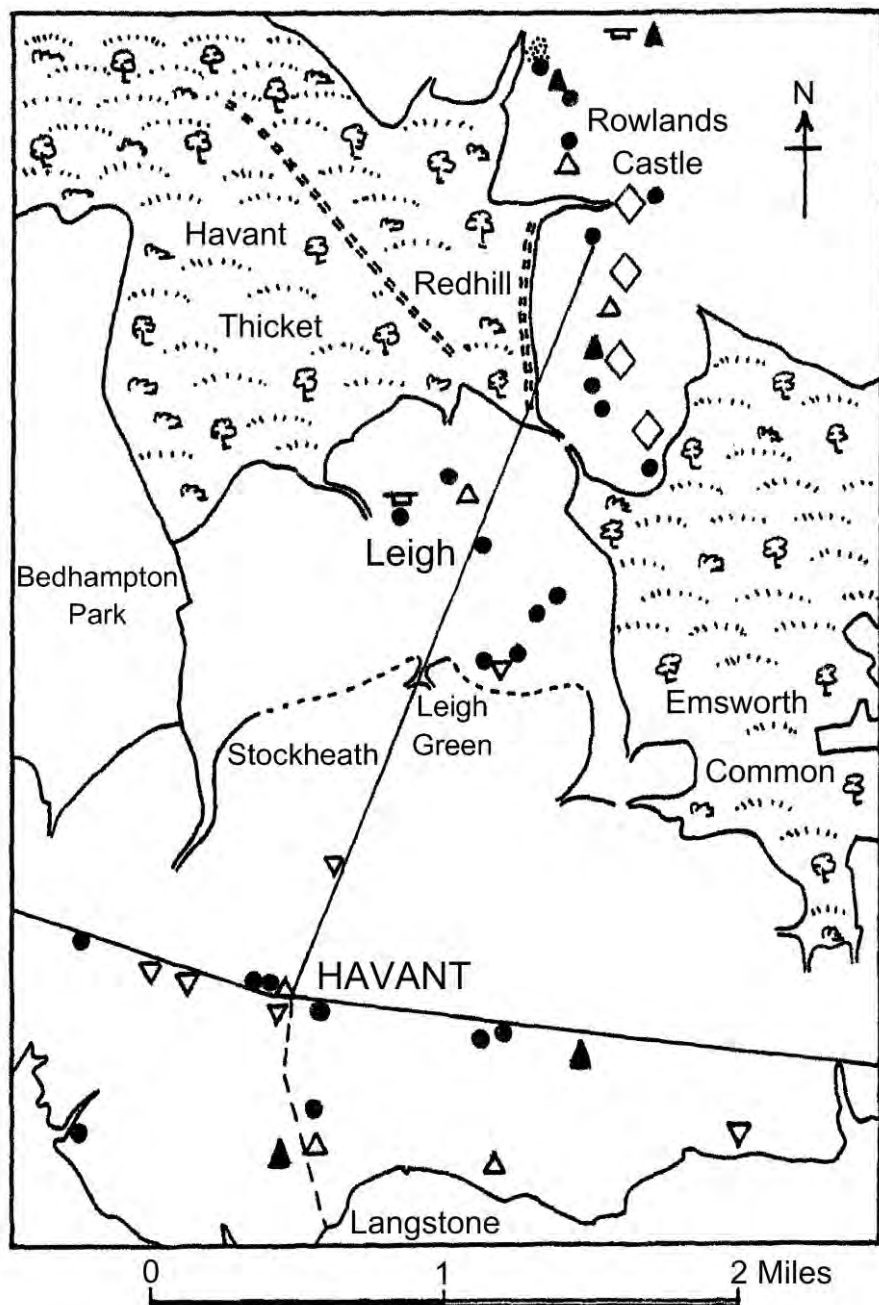
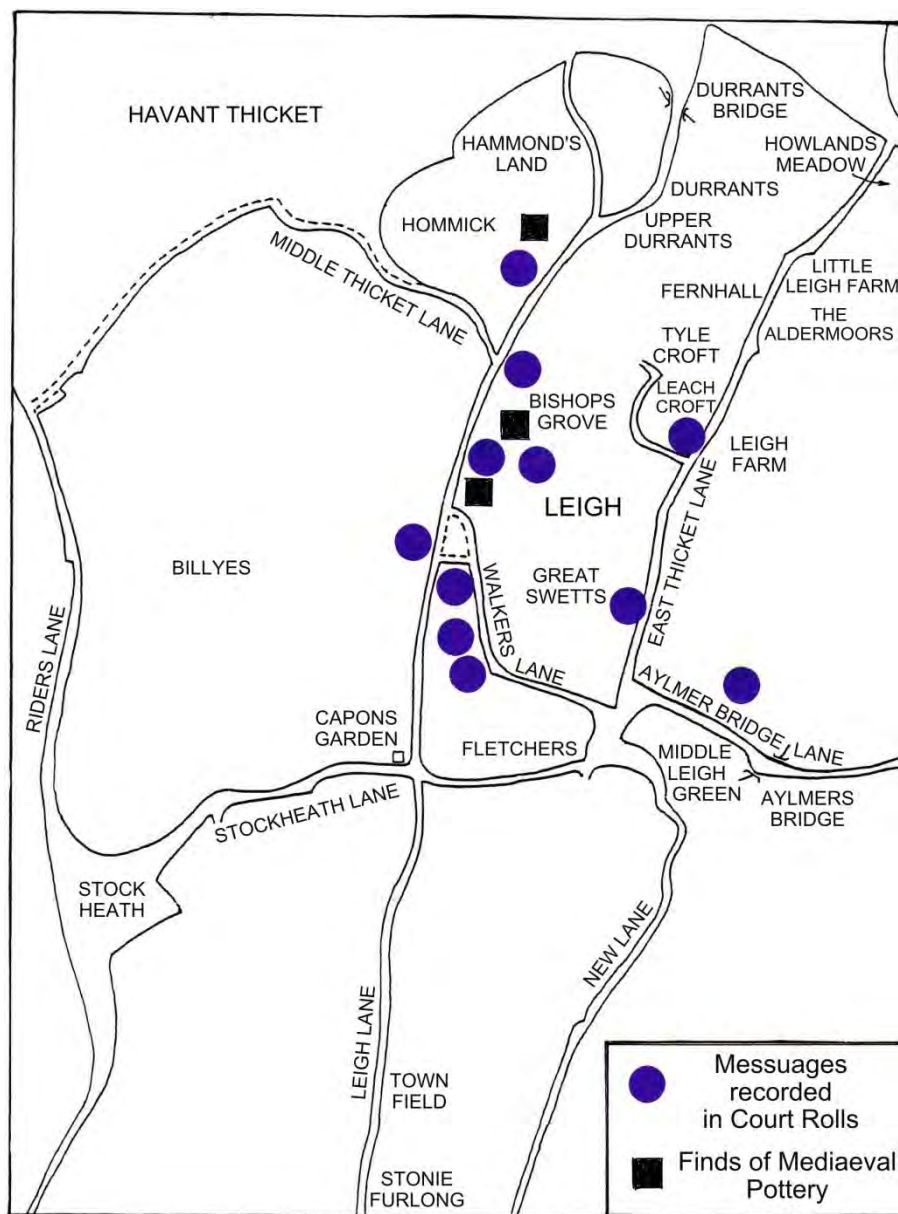


Figure 1

Romano-British Sites and Find spots in relation to Common Pasture, prior to Enclosure, in the Havant Area.

-  Villa
-  Other substantial building
-  Other settlement site
-  Pottery kiln
-  Other sites and find spots
-  Burial
-  'Celtic' Fields
-  Roman roads (certain & probable)
-  Trackway mentioned in Saxon Charter (possible route)
-  Common Pasture before 19th. century enclosure



Composite map showing the approximate locations in the Hamlet of Leigh of several messages (a house, outbuildings and land) and place names during the later Middle Ages, c.AD 1400 to 1600, and some road names of the 1800 and 1900s. *John Pile.*

When the sites and find-spots to the north of Havant are plotted on a map of the commons prior to their enclosure in the 19th century, a remarkable distribution pattern is revealed. Not one of the Romano-British sites occurs on common land, but each of the two groups - the Leigh group and the Rowlands Castle pottery group - fits neatly into its own area of 'assart', one to the north and one to the south of a narrow strip of 'waste' joining Havant Thicket to Emsworth Common. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that these clearings were formed from an area of more extensive wood-pasture in Romano-British or earlier times. The fuel for the pottery kilns was probably obtained from managed coppices in the vicinity of the site, and the establishment of these may have contributed to the initial clearance of some woodland. The 'assart' containing the Leigh group of sites may have a more complex history. As I have attempted to show, this appears to have reverted to secondary woodland after the period of Romano-British occupation, to be opened up again after the Norman Conquest.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to demonstrate continuity of occupation on any archaeological site, particularly from the Romano-British period to Saxon times. Margaret Gelling has argued convincingly for the survival of a sub-Roman population at Havant based upon the etymology of the place-name, but this population may have been limited to the main settlement.¹⁸ It is more difficult to demonstrate continuity of institutions such as transhumance and commoning practices. Perhaps such practices occurred independently at different times in response to similar circumstances. The evidence from Leigh may not bring us any closer to a solution for these problems, but it does suggest some interesting possibilities, and suggestions for future research.

A consideration of the evidence suggests similarities between the agricultural regime of Leigh in the Romano-British period and that of the Middle Ages. The wood-pastures of the Forest of Bere would undoubtedly have been exploited during the 1st to the 5th century, probably in much the same way as they were in Saxon and Mediaeval times, and such an extensive area as this must surely have been intercommoned by the surrounding settlements. The proximity of the Romano-British farmstead at Leigh to the wood-pastures of the forest; the arable lands to the south; and all the other components of a viable agricultural unit suggest that the choice of site was determined by the same considerations that supported the mediaeval hamlet of Leigh. Although there is no suggestion of continuity of occupation at Leigh between the Romano-British and Saxon periods, the place-name evidence considered above leads us to suspect that the site of Havant continued to be occupied, and the wood-pastures to the north continued to be grazed, throughout this period.

I am very grateful to Dennis Turner of the *Surrey Archaeological Society* for his helpful comments on the first draft of my article. It was particularly valuable to have the benefit of Dennis's innocent eye – so far as my chosen patch is concerned – and, hopefully, I have been able to render several obscure passages more intelligible. Any remaining obscurities, errors of fact, and errors of interpretation, are the fault of the author.

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Wartime Leigh Park 1939 to 1945

The day that war broke out on 3 September 1939 the bulk of Leigh Park was in the ownership of Parkleigh Estates with Leigh Park House and gardens still owned by the Fitzwygram family. The land was leased to some 14 tenant farmers who in the main grazed cattle but also grew cereal crops in much the same way as had been done for centuries. For a time the house was occupied by The Hulsea Girls' School.

It can no doubt be said that the development of the Leigh Park we see today started when the German Luftwaffe dropped their first bomb on Portsmouth in the air raid which took place on 11 July 1940. This was the first of many raids that resulted in the extensive damage to military establishments and the need to move them out of Portsmouth to a relatively safer location which was not too far away. For this Leigh Park was the ideal choice.

Leigh Park House and Westleigh House were taken over by the Admiralty and their Mine Design Department was evacuated there from HMS Vernon in Portsmouth. This later became known as the Admiralty Mining establishment and later His Majesty's Underwater Countermeasures and Weapons Establishment. It remained in use until 1959. Eastleigh House was taken over for the Women's Royal Naval Service.

In the area around Fraser Road some accommodation was provided for families which had been bombed out in Portsmouth. This area was further extended to provide a naval camp, HMS Daedalus III. At the end of the war this camp was used to accommodate Displaced Persons (DPs) from mainly the Baltic States. Later on again

part of it was used to house Stockheath School and the rest renovated to provide housing.

A naval camp was built in the Great Copse area and was called Stockheath Camp. After the navy had left it was at first taken over by squatters but later also renovated for housing. This also happened to a camp which was built in the Lockerley Road area for the navy.

Just before D-Day troops were camped in Battins Copse. There was a commando training ground near to Bartons Bridge where all the equipment was left in place which provided an ideal adventure playground for the children.

The Germans must have been aware of the military activity in the area but fortunately their bombing was not very accurate and the bombs that fell did little damage as they fell in open ground.

The following is from the official daily record of incidents that occurred or were observed in Leigh Park and extracts from ARP warden Arthur Jones' diary.

1940

September 11. At 2002 one HE (High Explosive) bomb fell and exploded at Leigh Park. No casualties, no damage.

September 29. 24 IBs (Incendiary Bombs) on Leigh Park in open ground. No damage, no casualties.

October 8. Naval rating killed in Leigh Park at 1900 by machine-gun fire. Naval authorities took charge of rating's body.

December 10. It has now been established that 25 HE bombs fell on land in the Havant, Bedhampton and Hayling Island districts on the evening of December 6. Several more fell in Langstone Harbour. Some were of a large calibre. Those that fell in Denvilles and Stockheath forming craters 60 feet (19 metres) across and 10 to 12 feet (3 to 4 metres) deep.

December 24. At 0330 a British Beaufort bomber crashed and caught fire near to Leigh Park the crew being killed. [The junction of Forestside Avenue and Whitsbury Road marks the spot where it crashed.] During the daylight on **December 23.** Some dogfights took place over the area but nothing dropped.

1941

January 6. A bomb crater of recent origin has been found in a field between Park Lane, Bedhampton and Stockheath.

March 10. One UX (Unexploded) anti-aircraft shell in centre of Havant to Rowlands Castle road opposite stables in Leigh Park. [Anti-aircraft gun emplacements were located at Prospect and Little Leigh Farms and there was also one behind the Cricketers.] Traffic diverted, road not closed. Hole of entry covered with sandbag.

March 17. At 0415 one HE bomb dropped on the Golf Links at Rowlands Castle.

April 9. At 00.45 stick of HE bombs and some IBs one mile south of Rowlands Castle at Comley Arch blocking road, B2148, and railway. Small fire no casualties. 20 foot (6 metre) crater on line – line closed for 24 to 36 hours. Passenger road service between Havant and Rowlands Castle. One cottage badly damaged. No casualties. Road repaired and open to traffic. Railway re-opened to traffic in the afternoon.

April 11. Four HE bombs in Havant Thicket.

April 18. At 0015 HE bomb at Helmsley House, West Leigh Road [Bartons Road]. Cottage demolished. Two dead [Herbert and Elizabeth Wills]. One child missing. During the nights April of 17th and 18th five enemy aircraft were destroyed during an attack on the Portsmouth district with parachute mines, HE bombs and IBs.

April 29. At 2320 reports of a large UXB having fallen were received from Waterlooville, Havant and Emsworth all indicating a location north of Havant but although a search has been made over a wide area between Havant and Rowlands Castle nothing has so far been found.

June 9. The first air raid warning was received in this district at 0053 on June 7, 1940. At this hour on June 7, 1941 the total time spent under warnings between the two being 1,137 hours 27 minutes.

June 14. One UX anti-aircraft shell at High Lawn near Leigh Park House. Police report UXB not shell. Diameter of hole 9 inches (24 cms) depth 5 foot (1½ metres).

June 22. Prospect Farm buildings. Ack-ack (anti-aircraft) shell or small HE bomb burst nearby. No damage or casualties.

1943

August 16. Two HE bombs at Havant Thicket. Search being made.

August 17. Ban imposed on entry into the area by anyone who did not live or work here. This applied to most of the South Coast. You had to show your identity card when asked to do so by the civil or military police. Havant and Emsworth was steadily becoming a military camp in preparation for the invasion of Europe – and the Germans knew that.

1944

April 1. Tightening of the travel ban. Heavy troop movements in the district.

May 22. King George VI seen in Bartons Road on his way to Rowlands Castle to review the troops.

June 5. ARP warden told by railwayman that 'picnic' is likely to start tonight! And it did start tonight. Before going to bed at 0015 he saw a marvellous procession of bombers with navigation lights on flying fast and low east-south-east.

June 16. Alerts at 0500 and 0600. Last night Germans sent over V-1 Pilotless Aircraft Bombs (Vergeltungswaffe-1, Retaliation Weapon-1) for the second time, first time not announced. They seem to be terrifying weapons. A quiet night.

June 24. Alert goes and V-1 passes over soon afterwards. Alerts at frequent and prolonged intervals until 0530 with V-1s going over every now and then. Exploded at a distance. First real attack by these things on this district.

September 7. Blackout to be partially lifted on September 17. Great news.

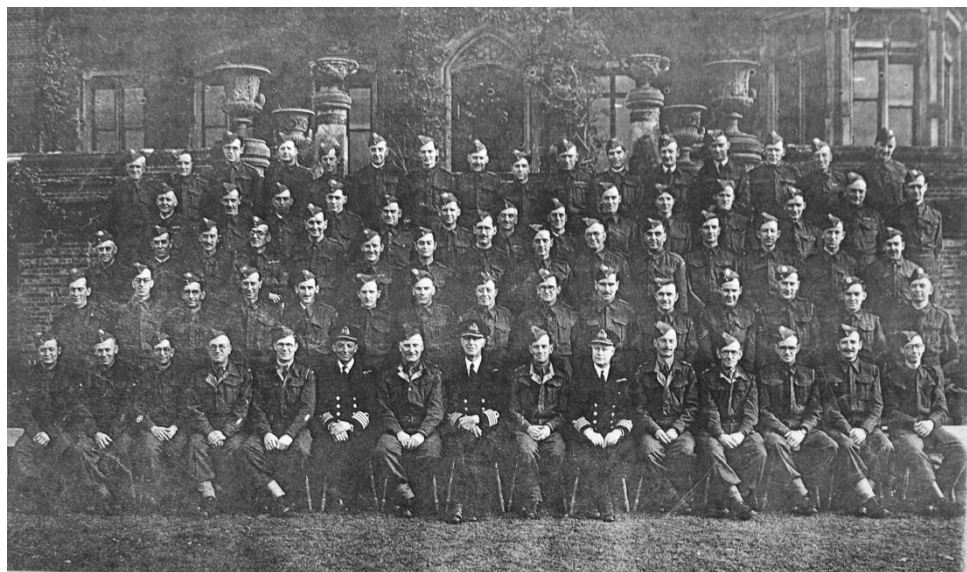
October 12. Havant street lamps re-lit, but half shaded.

February 27. At 1430 large fleet of Lancaster bombers going over.

May 8. VE (Victory in Europe) day.

May 13. Children attend an open air thanksgiving service in Havant Park.

August 15. VJ (Victory in Japan) day.



Leigh Park Home Guard photographed outside Leigh Park House circa 1944.

LEIGH PARK and PORTSMOUTH CITY COUNCIL 1943-44

Death of the Estate – Birth of A New One

It was in the early days of the war that the first proposal of extra land for housing the people of Portsmouth outside of the city was first mooted. In early 1943 the idea of Leigh Park being the site for a proposed satellite town was first raised by Portsmouth City Council. At a meeting of Portsmouth City Council, chaired by the City Architect Mr F.A.C. Maunder, in February 1943, to examine re-planning of the City after the war, Leigh Park, along with the areas of Waterlooville and Purbrook, as well

as Paulsgrove, were first mentioned as possible locations for new housing which would surely be needed after the duration of the war. As regard to Leigh Park the report on the meeting stated in the words of Mr Maunder that:

Leigh Park "Town"

We had to go into the country, and among the sites they had in mind the most famous was Leigh Park – a site of 1,400 acres of wood and park-land. It was proposed to put a satellite town there to take from 30,000 to 35,000 people.

A second site was Purbrook and Waterlooville. Cheap transport, he thought, could be obtained if the Corporation could go over their own land. The kind of houses would be those with gardens. There would have to be a small percentage of flats in the Old Portsmouth and Portsea district, where there was not enough land, especially if the Government took part of Portsea. The extension of the City boundaries would follow automatically.

Portsmouth Evening News, 24 February 1943

The Deputy Mayor of Portsmouth pointed out at another planning meeting on 16 March 1943 *"that the Leigh Park Estate had been chosen as a satellite town because people could get there quickly by electric train and by road."*

Leigh Park was certainly the flavour of the month with the Portsmouth City Councillors, for in September 1943 it was suggested that a new institute for the care of the aged and infirm of Portsmouth might be better suited to be built at Leigh Park

Leigh Park Site

Councillor N. Harrison, said the Council had tentatively sanctioned a plan and so far as he could see there would not be more than a third of the population on the island. The best site for an institution might be in the vicinity of Leigh Park where one of the satellite towns would be. The old and infirm should be in an institution where they could be reasonably looked after.

Portsmouth Evening News, 23 September 1943

This never came into being but the fervour for a new town at Leigh Park never abated. On 26 October 1943, at a meeting of Portsmouth City Council it was disclosed that in the previous July, Councillor Frederick Storey had informed the Lord Mayor and the Chairman of the Finance Committee that he was in possession of information which might enable him to purchase, on behalf of the Corporation, all the land required for the Leigh Park satellite town, together with the green belt. It was also said that this opportunity was not likely to continue when more publicity had been

given to the Council's proposals, and indeed in view of the mentions which had already been made, it would require extremely careful handling.

It has to be remembered that at this time that Leigh Park House, although occupied by the Admiralty, and the land that remained with it was still owned by Angela Fitzwygram. The other land that was interesting Portsmouth City Council was the land that Miss Fitzwygram had sold off in 1936 and further land not part of the original Leigh Park Estate. With Angela Fitzwygram moving away from Leigh Park it was probably her intention eventually to sell the estate but circumstances certainly brought this fact nearer.

The report of the meeting was published in the Council Minutes in February 1944 and continued:

Owing to the war-time restrictions on capital expenditure and the refusal of H.M. Government to consider schemes extending beyond one-year housing programme, there was great doubt whether the project could be carried into effect. Nevertheless the enormous advantage to the Corporation in preparing and carrying through their plans for the satellite town in owning the freehold in question seemed to justify every effort.

Accordingly a deputation consisting of the Lord Mayor, the Chairman of the Finance Committee, the Town Clerk, the City Treasurer, the Deputy City Architect and Councillor Storey waited upon the Ministry of Town and Country Planning and explained the proposal.

This was favourably received, but it became apparent that a large number of Ministries would be involved and the most serious obstacle would be the Treasury embargo. The City Treasurer was able to state that owing to the curtailment of capital expenditure during the War, there was sufficient money available in the Consolidated Fund to cover the expenditure without recourse to borrowing.

In view of the stated policy of the Treasury this matter had to be referred for the personal decision of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Thanks to the expeditious handling of the matter by the Ministries concerned and their favourable co-operation, Treasury agreement was secured during August.

On the authority of the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, Councillor Storey opened negotiations and when it became apparent that progress could be made, the matter was reported to that Committee who authorised Councillor Storey to continue negotiations on their behalf and agreed to indemnify him in respect of agency valuation and other professional fees which it might be necessary to incur. At the same time it was

clear that before the purchase could be made, the matter would require the sanction of the Council.

Councillor Storey immediately proceeded with the negotiations, but great difficulty was experienced in securing contracts. Councillor Storey reported at a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee that he would be in a position to bring the whole matter to the Council at the Meeting to be held on Tuesday, 26th October, 1943, but he also had to report that one contract had been received and was ready for approval when he had received an intimation from the Vendors that they had heard of the Planning proposals, and that they declined to proceed. Councillor Storey at his own risk approved the contract, and tendered the deposit, but the Vendor refused to accept this. This misfortune illustrated very clearly the difficulty of negotiating on behalf of the Local Authority, and it was clearly necessary for the highest degree of secrecy to be maintained.

The proposals provide for the acquisition by the Corporation of approximately 2,400 acres, bounded on the south by a line between Stockheath Lane and Denvilles, on the East by the main Southern Railway, on the North-East by the Emsworth-Horndean Road, on the North-West by Blendworth Common, and on the West generally by the Western boundary of the Havant and Waterloo Urban District, at a purchase price not exceeding £150,000 inclusive of costs:

The Committee recommended:

1. That the action taken be confirmed and that Councillor Storey be authorised to endeavour to complete the purchase of land referred to as agent for the Council, and that the Lord Mayor, the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, Councillor Storey and the Town Clerk take all necessary steps to vest the freehold of the property in the Corporation.
2. That the City Treasurer be authorised to defray the costs of the purchase under the contracts secured by Councillor Storey, together with all legal and professional agency costs and expenses incurred by him.
3. That no further statement as to the acquisition of the land be made before a further Report from your Committee has been presented to the Council.

The Report was accepted by the Council. (City of Portsmouth Records of the Corporation, 1936-1945, Compiled by G.E. Barnet, Edited by V. Blanchard.)

With the sale of Leigh Park House and the adjoining land looking imminent, a sale of "Building Materials and Estate Equipment" was advertised in the local press by

direction of Miss Fitzwygram on 10 January 1944. Sadly this appears to be one of the last acts in the final decline and sale of what was left of the estate:

Leigh Park Estate, Havant

In Wakeford's Copse, opposite Leigh Park House, on the main Havant-Rowlands Castle Road. One and a half miles from Havant Station. On the bus route.

SALE OF BUILDING MATERIALS & ESTATE EQUIPMENT.

Including

5-H.P. Ruston Hornsby Engine. Royal Mortising Machine. Fourteen 12 to 54-Round Ladders, Bricks, Tiles, R.W. Guttering. Nails, Screws, 5 sets of Stocks and Dies. Timber, Paint Roofing Materials. Wire Netting. Ropes. New Cottage Range. Galvanised Tanks. Field Gates. etc. which will be conducted by PUBLIC AUCTION by Messrs Wyatt & Son, F.A.I. On Monday, 10th January 1944. By direction of Miss Fitzwygram.

Sale to commence at 12 Noon. On view Saturday 8th January 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Catalogue (price 3d.) from the Auctioneers, 10 West Street, Havant.

Portsmouth Evening News, 6 January 1944

The future of Leigh Park and its relation to the possible development of Portsmouth was discussed at a meeting of the Havant and Waterloo Urban District Council on 23 January 1944 and at first the councillors at Havant were surprised at how large the development was intended to be and decided to oppose Portsmouth at every opportunity, but alas with no notable success. As the following meeting held by Havant and Waterloo Urban District Council with the Town Clerk of Portsmouth shows, it does appear that Portsmouth Council, who after all, were proposing to build on land within the Urban District of Havant, kept the Council at Havant at arms-length, and especially in relating to Leigh Park House, which all seemed a little unseemly but necessary as we will see:

Future of Leigh Park – “No Details at Present”

Portsmouth Town Clerk

The future of Leigh Park and its relation to possible developments of Portsmouth was discussed at a meeting of the Havant and Waterlooville Urban District Council yesterday.

In the Roads and Works Committee's report reference was made to a meeting of the Portsmouth and District Town Planning Joint Advisory Committee

which was attended by Councillors T.A. Herriott and B.F. Powell and it was recorded that in reply to a question as to why the City of Portsmouth had not submitted any plans on their proposed satellite towns to the authorities in whose areas such towns were proposed to be sited, the Town Clerk of Portsmouth stated that his Council were not in the position to submit any detailed proposals at present.

Mr Powell commented that it was a very unsatisfactory state of affairs. Capt. A.E. Jones M.C. (Vice Chairman) said that in regard to the proposed satellite town to be sited at Leigh Park he would like to know if the Clerk of the Council could tell him whether Leigh Park House and a portion of the land adjoining had quite recently had been purchased by a member of the City Council of Portsmouth.

Mr A.H. Brown, J.P.: Could we not have the facts. Are they not in the possession of this Council? He added that it would be a serious matter if through his membership of the Council learn that a piece of land was desired by the Council and he were to purchase it and re-sell to the Council. It was a question of public policy and he raised it in the hope of getting a little publicity as he thought public opinion would then do the rest.

Lieut.-Comdr. Herriott said that this Council was not concerned in who purchased the land, but when plans were submitted for its lay-out and development they could reject or approve them. He added that two-thirds of Leigh Park were in the Petersfield Rural area.

Mr Powell thereupon suggested that that Council should be communicated with so that the tentacles of the Portsmouth octopus, about which he had warned them many months ago, could be held in a net. No proposition was submitted so the next item was proceeded with.

Portsmouth Evening News, 24 January 1944

By early February 1944 the deal to buy a total of 1,671 acres of land around Leigh Park, including Leigh Park House and the land adjoining measuring 497 acres was completed by Portsmouth City Council. This was enough land for the proposed satellite town as well as the green belt around Leigh Park House, which would not be included in the new building scheme. *The Portsmouth Evening News* carried the news in their edition of 9 February 1944 and highlighted the wonderful job Councillor Frederick Storey had done in negotiating the buying of the land for the new scheme. The work carried out by Councillor Storey in acquiring the land cannot be understated and it is through his hard work the scheme was completed. Interestingly, during the process of acquiring Leigh Park House and the land still

attached to it from Angela Fitzwygram Councillor Storey, for a while, became the lord of the manor of Havant, as he was in the position of signing the contract to buy the remaining Leigh Park Estate.*

*Technically the owner of the Leigh Park Estate was automatically the lord of the manor of Havant. This goes back to the time when William Garret, at Leigh Park, 1800-1819 acquired the lease of the manor of Havant from his brother-in-law Richard Bingham Newland who was renting or leasing the manor from the Bishop of Winchester. In 1827 Sir George Thomas Staunton bought manor from the Bishop Of Winchester for the sum of £2,075 1s. 9d. Subsequently the manor was passed to the owners of Leigh Park Estate. Councillor Storey is remembered at Leigh Park (Staunton Country Park by the walled garden in the North Gardens being named after him.

Portsmouth City Council Buy Leigh Park Estate “Wonderful Job by Councillor Storey” Negotiated Contracts

In adopting unanimously the recommendation for the purchase of 1,761 acres of the Leigh Park Estate, Portsmouth City Council yesterday acquired almost the whole of the area of one of the proposed satellite towns mentioned in their post-war re-planning scheme. Tributes were paid to the public-spirited action of Councillor F.G.H. Storey in negotiating the contracts.

On October 26 last year there was a meeting of the Council in committee at which it was disclosed that in the previous July, Councillor Storey had informed the Lord Mayor and the Chairman of the Finance Committee that he was in possession of information which might enable him to purchase on behalf of the Corporation all the land required for the Leigh Park satellite town, together with the green belt. This opportunity was not likely to continue when more publicity had been given to the Council's proposals, and, indeed, in view of the mentions which had already been made of the proposal, it would require extremely careful handling.

Alderman Harold Pink's report on the meeting in committee went on to state: "Owing to the war-time restrictions on capital expenditure and the refusal of H.M. Government to consider schemes extending beyond a one-year housing programme there was great doubt whether the project could be carried into effect. Nevertheless, the enormous advantage to the Corporation in preparing and carrying through their plans for the satellite town in owning the freehold in question seemed to justify every effort.

Accordingly a deputation consisting of the Lord Mayor, Chairman of the Finance Committee, Town Clerk, City Treasurer, Deputy City Architect, and Councillor Storey waited upon the Ministry of Town and Country Planning and explained the proposal. This was favourably received but it became apparent that a large number of Ministries would be involved and the most serious obstacle would be the Treasury embargo. The City Treasurer was able to state that owing to the curtailment of capital expenditure during the war there was sufficient money available in the Consolidated Fund to cover the expenditure without recourse to borrowing.

Meetings were subsequently arranged when Councillor Storey and the Deputy City Architect conferred with the Ministry of Health with regard to the housing programme, the Ministry of Agriculture who were concerned with the utilization of agricultural land for housing and the Ministry of Transport to co-operate the scheme with trunk road proposals.

Agreement was reached with these Ministries, and after a further deputation consisting of the Town Clerk and Councillor Storey, had visited the Ministry of Town and Country Planning the case was submitted to the Treasury with the recommendations of the other Ministries. In view of the stated policy of the Treasury this matter had to be referred for the personal decision of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Thanks to the expeditious handling of the matter by the Ministries concerned and their favourable co-operation, Treasury agreement was secured during August.

On the authority of the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, Councillor Storey opened negotiations and when it became apparent that progress could be made the matter was reported to that Committee who authorised Councillor Storey to continue negotiations on their behalf and agreed to indemnify him in respect of agency, valuation and other professional fees which it might be necessary to incur. At the same time it was clear that before any purchase could be made the matter would require the sanction of the Council. Councillor Storey immediately proceeded with the negotiations, but owing to the complexity of the transaction and the legal delays, great difficulty was experienced in securing contracts. Councillor Storey reported at a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee that he would be in a position to bring the whole matter to the Council at the meeting to be held on Tuesday, October 26, 1943, but he also had to report that one contract had been received and was ready for approval when he had received an intimation from the Vendors that they had heard of the planning

proposals and that they declined to proceed. Councillor Storey, at his own risk, approved the contract and tendered the deposit, but the Vendors refused to accept this.

This misfortune illustrated very clearly the difficulties of negotiating on behalf of the local authority, and though every step was taken to heal the breach it was not possible at that moment to state what the outcome would be, but it was clearly necessary for the highest degree of secrecy to be maintained. The proposals provided for the acquisition by the Corporation of approximately 2,400 at a purchase price not exceeding £150,000 inclusive of costs.

It was now reported to the Council that in accordance with the recommendations made by the Council, Councillor Storey, acting on behalf of the Council, signed a contract for the purchase of Leigh Park House and adjoining land to an area approximately 497 acres, and the purchase of this land had now be completed. After further negotiations with owners of adjoining land he had been able to exchange contracts for the purchase of a further 1,174 acres, making a total of 1,671 acres covering almost all of the area of the proposed satellite town, together with a “green belt” to the south and west.

The owners of the remainder of the land referred to in the Committee’s report to the Council in Committee had refused to continue negotiations, and accordingly Councillor Storey and the Town Clerk had a further interview with the Ministry of Town and Country Planning to report progress and to urge the Ministry to use compulsory powers for the purchase of 798 acres (approximately) in that ownership. The acquisition of this further 798 acres would complete the area of the new town (with the exception of the part lying to the east of the main London-Havant Railway), together with a forest area to the north, and would bring the total area up to about 2,470 acres. It was anticipated that the total purchase price inclusive of expenses would be substantially below the figure authorised by the Council.

Portsmouth Evening News, 9 February 1944

The selling of the remainder of the estate, including the mansion, by Angela Fitzwygram, did not affect what was going on at Leigh Park at the time. The Admiralty carried on as before and in fact stayed at Leigh Park and West Leigh House well into the 1950s before handing over to Portsmouth City Council.

The general opinion in the press was that this was a good piece of business by Portsmouth City Council, but some people who remembered the estate pre – war

were saddened by its demise. The following are two letters addressed to the Editor of the *Portsmouth Evening News*, giving differing opinions:

“Well Done Sir!”

Sir, - The purchase by the Portsmouth City Council of Leigh Park is undoubtedly a fine piece of work, and we shall in the future look with pride and satisfaction to this grand addition to our city. In my opinion the price paid is reasonable, because we are a prosperous city and we can well afford to purchase another couple of “Leigh Parks.”

To Councillor Storey I say “Well done, sir!” and I sincerely trust that the two councillors to be elected in the near future will be business men of this type.

Yours etc. Dan Garcia.

Portsmouth Evening News, 11 February 1944

The next letter addressed to the Editor of the *Portsmouth Evening News* was written by someone who appears to have known the estate well, and bemoans the fact that estates like Leigh Park with its vast parkland and woodlands will sadly be taken over for the purposes of building to rehouse the many people needing homes after the war:

Memories

Sir, - When one hears of such happenings as the purchase of Leigh Park Estate, that old but very true phrase of “How Time Flies” well and truly makes one feel that a few years have flown by unnoticed. The memories of Leigh Park in bygone days make one realize what a pleasant beauty spot this is. First there was our old Sunday School outings by four-horse brake from Portsmouth. How these were enjoyed by the children (it’s a job these days to convince our children that this was so). Then there were the days when the Hambledon Hounds held their meet at Leigh Park House, Captain Standing being the Master at that time, and foxes were plentiful. I doubt very much if one could be found these days.

I suppose we must live with the times, and an outlet must be found for living accommodation when post-war days arrive. No doubt many others like myself will be sorry to see such a beauty spot with roads running through it and houses with their smoking chimneys. A big effort was being made in pre-war days to preserve the rural beauty spots of this country. Imagine the number that will disappear when building starts in earnest. But there, our City fathers cast the die on what is to be, or what is not to be, so when the time comes for

the bricks and mortar to be unloaded, may they in their wisdom do away with as little of what nature has made beautiful by sparing those fine trees and woodlands.

Yours etc., A.F. Pack

Portsmouth Evening News, 16 February 1944

As far as the Leigh Park Estate was concerned this sale brought the end of Leigh Park and the estate and its long history as a family home to an end. Of course, it is not the end of the story; that continues to this day with the Staunton Country Park open for the many visitors to enjoy, but from February 1944 the long chapter of life at Leigh Park ended and another chapter began.

We will end in February 1944 when the last piece of the Leigh Park jigsaw was sold to Portsmouth City Council when the mansion house and surrounding land was sold. The farms and small holdings and other land sold off by Angela Fitzwygram in 1936 made up the largest portion of what would become the Leigh Park Housing Estate. The story of this is covered very well in other publications and we need not go any further with the story of the housing estate. We will leave at May 1944 when the final cost of the whole project was released to the press:

Inside Story of the Purchase of Leigh Park Estate Secured at 1937 Value

Further details of the purchase of the Leigh Park Estate were given to Portsmouth City Council yesterday by the Finance Committee. Altogether the area of the land purchased was approximately 1,672 acres at a cost of £122,465, which was equivalent to £75 an acre.

The land comprised two areas. Area 1 lay on the south and west sides of the estate and covered approximately 1,175 acres, the vendors being Parkleigh Investments Ltd, who had entered into a contract to sell for £85,000. Alderman H.D. Gilbert, one of the directors of the company, was a member of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and was aware of the purpose for which the property was required. The Committee placed on record their appreciation of his co-operation which enabled the Corporation to acquire this more valuable portion of the land at the same price per acre as that for the central part (Area 2).

The contract provided for the completion of the purchase either on, December 31, 1948, or the expiration of 12 months from the date of an armistice with Germany whichever was the earlier.

The income from the various tenancies was given as about £2,319 per annum, while the annual outgoings on the whole estate (Areas 1 and 2) were stated to be about £456. It was understood from Councillor Storey that the vendors who purchased in 1937 (1936 sale), paid £72 for the property, inclusive of timber. During 1937-39 several plots of land were sold off, amounting in all to not less than 25 acres. Substantial sums were paid for those plots, up to £500 per acre.

Area 1 consisted of meadow land, a small portion of building land, a lake, ten farms varying in acreage from 11 to 237 acres, certain arable land, plantations, and copses. The agent who acted for Councillor Storey was Mr H.A. Napier.

Area 2 comprises Leigh Park Mansion and approximately 496 acres, formerly a part of the Fitzwygram estate. The purchase money for the area was £33,400, and additional expenses amounting to £32,657 6s. 10d., (timber £1,600); stamp duty on conveyance £334, agents fees £528 11s.; solicitors' costs and incidentals £194 15s. 10d.

The annual income from tenancies in this area was given as £1,094, while the tithes, land tax, rates, and insurance amounted to £186 9s. 6d. The aggregate income estimated to be derived from existing rents in Areas 1 and 2 was as far as could be ascertained, £3,414 3s. 6d. per annum. Area 2 comprised the mansion house and grounds, pasture, woodlands and arable land together with various cottages.

Acting on the authority of the Committee and the Council, Councillor Storey had instructed Messrs Pink and Arnold, estate agents and surveyors, Wickham, to carry out the management of the estate, and the Committee recommended the acceptance of that firm's terms of five per cent on gross receipts, plus out of pocket expenses. The Committee also recommended the affixing of the Common Seal to all document vesting Areas 1 and 2 in the Corporation.

Portsmouth Evening News, 10 May 1944

So what became of the house and the land attached? The price paid by Portsmouth City Council for the house and land sold by Angela Fitzwygram was £32,657 6s 10d and £1,600 for timber and this amounted to approximately 496 acres and comprising: *the mansion house and grounds, pasture, woodlands and arable land together with various cottages*. If we add the money Angela Fitzwygram received for the house, land and other property and if the £72,000 for the land sold off in 1936 is added to it means the whole of the Fitzwygram Estate was sold for £106,257 6s. 10d.

It is unclear if any of the this land went for building but land at Great Copse and close to the South Lodge were used for housing but the majority was deemed “Green Belt” and remained as so as it is today.

It is only left for us to say what happened to the mansion and land attached. After the Admiralty gave up Leigh Park House in the late 1950s it was deemed that the house was not in a fit state. It was said that interior walls had been removed and also with the risk of vandalism it was decided by Portsmouth City Council in June 1959 to demolish the house. Prior to this, in December 1954, suggestions were being made that perhaps the house could be used as a community centre but it was established that this was not feasible. Other suggestions were that it could become a Cottage Hospital but this again was deemed a non-runner.

Portsmouth City Council kept its word in regarding leaving the land close to the house as “Green Belt”. The whole of the north gardens remain, with some of the garden features such as the lake and even some of Sir George Staunton’s garden features. The Home Farm and the land that went with it, which unlike the other tenanted farms was not sold off and remained as part of the estate until sold off by Angela Fitzwygram and are still part of what is now Staunton Country Park. In July 1951 Portsmouth City Council acquired another 51 acres *of vistas and area adjoining Leigh Park House within Havant Thicket* for the price of £3,750. Again this was deemed “Green Belt”.

In August 1953 the gardens and parkland at Leigh Park, measuring 180 acres was classified as a ‘playground for everyone in the District’ being open for everyone on Saturday, Sunday, and Bank Holiday. Today of course, luckily the north gardens and the south gardens, which include the Farm Trail, are open to visitors as part of the Staunton Country Park and preserved hopefully for generations to come.

And what of Angela Fitzwygram? The last of the family to bear that name she died on 30 July 1984 in a nursing home in Hindhead, just a few weeks before her 99th birthday. She was buried alongside her brother Sir Frederick and her parents at St John’s Church at Rowlands Castle on 6 August 1984.

Archaeological Excavations at Leigh Park, 1992

By C.K. Currie

Excavations were carried out on the extensive landscape gardens of Sir George Staunton at Leigh Park, near Havant. The results indicated an earlier beginning to elements of the designed landscape than previously considered. Walled gardens and other features already existed before an earlier owner, William Garrett’s time (1800-

19). Both Garrett and Staunton (1819-59) added considerably to the landscape design. During this period, a hamlet with possible medieval, and earlier origins was swept away. A good assemblage of seed remains from both the medieval and designed landscape phases was recovered that adds a further dimension to our knowledge of the site.

The earlier landscape around Leigh Park had strong connections with medieval stock pasturing in Havant Thicket and the Royal Forest of Bere. It would appear that the gardener's cottage, the farm and Leigh House, plus other houses now vanished, formed the hamlet of West Leigh.

Trench 21: the Walled Garden (2.1m by 0.5m)

The earliest levels in this trench, just to the south of the present farmhouse, revealed irregular disturbance into undisturbed sub-soils. One large irregular pit was up to 1.4m wide and 0.4m deep. The unevenness of the edges of this feature suggested that the disturbance had been caused by the removal of a large root mass, probably belonging to a tree. Above this was build-up of sandy loams, up to 0.42m thick. The upper levels of this layer contained eighteenth century ceramics, although there were medieval wares throughout.

Immediately above this was a dump of gravel up to 0.2m thick at the west end of the trench, but becoming less substantial towards its east end, where the individual stones were much smaller. This gravel was overlain by 0.25m of topsoil.

The evidence suggests that at some time, possibly in the medieval period, tree roots were grubbed out of the area immediately in front of the present farmhouse. Between this period and the late 18th century, soil had accumulated with the possibility of some deliberate levelling. A combination of ceramic and documentary evidence suggests that this had occurred between c1792 and 1833. A gravel area appears to be shown here on the Tithe plan of 1842.

Trench 23: the Farmhouse Garden (11m by 1m)

No features were recovered in this trench. This trench was located in the centre of the area surrounded by the perimeter path shown on plans and maps between 1842 and 1908. As no traces of planting were found it was thought that this area may have been lawned.

Trench 24: the Farmhouse Garden (2.1m by 0.5m)

A cambered gravel surface was located less than 0.5 m below the surface. This was 1.7m wide, and was partly overlain by a thin spread of cinders.

The gravel surface was interpreted as the perimeter path shown on various plans and maps between 1842 and 1908. This path delimited the edges of the Farmhouse Garden in the shape of an oval. The cinders represented a crude resurfacing at a later date.

Trench 25: the Farmhouse Garden (6m by 2.5m with extension 9m by 0.5m to the south)

An earlier ground surface was discovered 1.04m below the present turf. This was overlain by a dump of soil, up to 0.9m thick. Cut into this dump were a number of roughly circular features. Only one of these was excavated. This proved to have an irregular bottom, up to 0.35m deep, and was filled by a dark brown soil.

At the far south end of the trench, a crude surface of pea gravel was located less than 0.1m below the turf. The full width was not excavated, but the width of that part uncovered was nearly 1.8m. Beneath this was a layer of yellow sand 0.07m thick. This overlay a surface of large gravel stones. The excavated part of the latter was 1.1m wide.

Environmental sampling has shown that a medieval settlement existed on the earliest surface that seems to have been producing arable crops. Just prior to the making of the farmhouse Garden large quantities of soil were dumped to level the area out. Cut into this leveling a number of shallow planting pits, up to 0.35m deep, were dug. These seemed to have been filled with enriched soils, and from the nature of disturbance made by subsequent roots, were planted with shrubs. The spacing of the pits suggest that these were systematically, but not formally, spaced.

The surfaces of the south end of the trench were interpreted as the former perimeter path. The large stones of the lowest level, and the way sharp edges protruded, suggest that the original surface of this path had been robbed. It was subsequently decided to resurface the path with a scatter of pea gravel over a sand bedding. This was crudely done, and it appears that the material used was uniform as the pitch in Trench 24 was found to be resurfaced in cinders.

Trench 26: the Farmhouse Garden (10.2m by 0.5m, with extension to south 3m by 1m)

No features were found in this trench other than an irregular gravel feature 0.15m below the turf. This proved to be a gravel surface laid into a shallow cut 0.1m deep and 0.65m wide. Although the cut itself was approximately regular, the gravel within it spread beyond its edges. To the east of this feature were a number of large stone blocks and the base of a concrete pillar. Both to the east and west large quantities of iron nails were found scattered. No features were found associated with this material.

The surface was thought to be the remains of the former perimeter path. This showed signs of being much disturbed, supporting the question made by the evidence in Trench 25 that the path had been partly robbed at some time. There was no sign here of any attempt to resurface the path. Although no other features were found, the building debris, together with the very large quantity of iron nails

recovered in a relatively small area, suggests that a temporary farm building may have been erected nearby after the path had fallen out of use.

Specialist Reports and Conclusion

Pottery gave some clues to the date of origin of the Regency Farmhouse. There were sherds of later seventeenth and eighteenth century wares (tin glazed earthenwares, salt glazed stonewares and creamwares) beneath the gravel hard standing of the house. This feature appears to be shown on the map of 1842. Cartographic evidence suggests that an earlier farmhouse had been demolished between the late 1790s and 1833, and a new one built on a new alignment associated with this gravel area. The pottery evidence suggests a date prior to 1830 for the laying of the gravel, and it is possible that this work also precedes Staunton's purchase.

Alongside the post-medieval wares were reasonable quantities of medieval wares. Apart from late post-medieval flowerpots, medieval wares were by far the most common ceramics found. This, together with other evidence, suggests that the farmhouse, perhaps even a hamlet at Leigh alongside the old road, had its origins in the medieval period. The environmental evidence, suggests that this settlement was associated, at least in part, with arable husbandry. Later post-medieval farming was associated almost entirely with stock keeping, with cattle predominating.

The greatest concentration of charred remains came from a sample beneath the Regency Farmhouse Garden. These included a number of weeds associated with agricultural crops. There were also fragments of unidentified cereal plants present, indicating that this assemblage probably represents residues from crop processing disposed of by burning.

Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club & Archaeological Society. Vol. 51, 1995.

Sir George Staunton by Geoff Salter ALA.

Sir George Thomas Staunton, a fascinating and remarkable man, was born in Ireland in 1781. He became one of the foremost experts on China after spending much of his early life in that mysterious land. Originally he went as page to Lord Macartney who headed the first British Embassy to try and establish diplomatic contact between Britain and China. Later he returned to China as a young man, employed by the East India Company, where he stayed for nearly twenty years.

The unknown and secretive world inside China offered a great challenge to Sir George, and his experiences were to influence him in later life. In 1817 he left the East India Company and returned to Britain where he entered the world of politics. As a recognised authority on China, Sir George was frequently consulted by Lord Palmerston and many others for advice on Chinese affairs.

He decided to improve his social standing by purchasing a country estate, and the Leigh Park House and gardens proved ideal for his needs.

The original Leigh Park House, which stood in the South Gardens, was a modest 18th Century building and according to a 1792 map was owned by Mr Harrison of 'Ley'. William Garrett bought the house in 1800 who had it enlarged and almost rebuilt in 1802 by architect John Kent of Southampton.

In 1817 Leigh Park was offered for sale and Sir John Julius Angerstein showed interest in its purchase. The transaction, however, was not completed as Sir John withdrew his offer due to his surveyor's report of extensive dry rot. A few years later Sir John died, and much of his art collection was purchased for the nation to form the nucleus of the National Gallery. The lease of the estate was eventually purchased in 1820 by Sir George Thomas Staunton and seven years later he bought the freehold from the Bishop of Winchester for £2,075. Sir George soon added to his estate by purchasing Havant Farm in 1821, Bedhampton Farm in 1832 and other farms on Hayling Island. It appears Sir George's ambition was to produce a picturesque landscaped park in which he could recall much of his early life in China. Also he needed somewhere suitable to plant the many rare plants which resulted from the collecting activities of the members of two Embassies to China and plant collectors acquainted with Sir George Thomas Staunton. Many new species from China were first introduced into this country through the gardens at Leigh Park. Many still incorporate 'Staunton' in their botanical names, commemorating the work of his father, Sir George Leonard Staunton, such as "*STAUNTONIA LATI FOLIA*".

Sir Joseph Banks, the eminent Botanist, was a friend of both father and son and encouraged them to promote the collection of botanical specimens while visiting China.

The gardens at Leigh Park are unique in this part of the country as they still retain the results of years of work which helped create a garden in the manner of an 18th Century landscaped park.

Sir George Staunton's early life in China did much to influence his designs for Leigh Park and its gardens. Today, much of the original garden layout and some of the buildings still stand as a monument to a well-known politician and unique expert on China. Sir George's love of China began in 1791 when his father, Sir George Leonard Staunton, was invited to accompany Lord Macartney on his mission to China. It was one of the most costly and magnificent missions ever to leave this country, and George Thomas Staunton, at the age of twelve, became page to Lord Macartney on this momentous voyage.

George Thomas had a 'classical' education, being privately tutored, and by the age of twelve could speak six languages. On the voyage to China two Chinese priests, Paolo Cho and Jacobus Le, were employed as translators for the Embassy and they

taught George some of the basics of the Chinese language. Soon after the Embassy arrived, Lord Macartney used young George to translate and write the Embassy's letters which were sent to the Emperor. The Embassy reached Jehol, the Emperor's Summer Palace, and was presented to the Emperor Kien Lung. The Emperor had heard about the young English boy who could both write and speak the native language, and George Thomas was summoned before Emperor Kien Lung who presented him with one of his own yellow silk purses, embroidered with a five-clawed dragon. A purse was a highly prized gift, but to be given the Emperor's own was a gift above all others. He then asked George to say something in Chinese, so George thanked the Emperor for the purse in fluent Chinese.

George returned to England, spending a time at Cambridge. He then returned to China as a servant of the East India Company. By the time his father died in 1801 George Thomas had worked his way up in the company and by 1804 was a Supercargo. His speed of promotion was due mainly to his ability to speak and write directly in Chinese, and also his own determination to advance his career. He also worked on translations, the main one being the first translation of a Chinese book directly into English in 1816. This was the 'Fundamental Laws' (Penal Code) called 'Ta-Tsing-leu-lee'. Sir George became head of the East India Company's factory in Canton, and in 1817 was sent to Peking as one of three representations on the conduct of mandarins towards the merchants of Canton. Later that year he returned to England and entered political life, firstly as Member of Parliament for St Michael's, Cornwall, for eight years. He then represented Heytisbury in Wiltshire, before coming to this area to represent South Hampshire in 1832 and Portsmouth in 1838, a seat which he held for fourteen years.

He was one of the founder members of the Royal Asiatic Society, to which he gave a collection of over 3,000 of his Chinese books. During Sir George's residence in the area he held much respect locally as he built up the estate, house and gardens. He improved the house, added a lake, arbours, magnificent greenhouses, bridges and walks, and planted many rare and unusual trees and plants.

Sir George, a bachelor, died in 1859 and the estate was purchased in 1861 by another MP, William Henry Stone. He was a family man and found that the house was not large enough, so decided to build another property. The new mansion was built in 1863 in the North Gardens, overlooking the lake, from designs by Richard William Drew of Westminster. William Stone lived there until 1874, when he lost his political seat and moved away.

The estate was then bought by Lieutenant General Sir Frederick Wellington Fitzwygram, who continued the tradition, started in William Stone's time, of opening his gardens to the public for fetes, horticultural shows and other special events.

Many local people remember travelling out on Sunday School Outings by train, then horse and trap, to picnic in the grounds.

Sir Frederick became Member of Parliament for South Hampshire in 1884 until 1900. He was respected throughout Hampshire and the Freedom of Portsmouth was granted to him in 1901. He died in 1904.

Sir Frederick was succeeded by his son, Frederick Lofthouse Fitzwygram, who died in 1920. In 1936 the estate, apart from the house and gardens was sold to Parkleigh Estates. The house was used by the evacuated Hilsea College for one year at the start of World War 2, it was then commandeered in 1940 by the Admiralty Mines Department. In 1944 the house, gardens and estate of 2,400 acres were purchased by Portsmouth City Council. The main part of the estate and farms were used to build one of the largest council estates in Britain to house the bombed out and expanding population of Portsmouth.

The house built by William Stone was pulled down in 1959 because its upkeep was too expensive. During its life, the house had been described by some as a 'Victorian monstrosity' and by others as a 'building of great charm'.

Today, one hundred and fifty two acres are retained as a Conservation Area covering most of the original fenced-in gardens around the house, but it is bisected by Middle Park Way, with Leigh Park Gardens (or North Gardens) to the north and Leigh Park Farm Trail (or South Gardens) on the south side. The layout still follows the paths originally laid down in 1820–1840 by Sir George Staunton. Present policy is to seek to recover as much of the original character of Staunton's landscaped gardens as possible, including replacing many exotic plants first introduced into this country by Sir George.

Written and researched by Geoff Salter ALA, on behalf of the Bosmere 100 Society and published in conjunction with Havant Borough Council. June 1983.

The Hermitage Stream Catchment Area

TOPOGRAPHY – The Hermitage Stream catchment of 19 square km. comprises mainly Tertiary deposits of London Clay and Reading Beds with some Upper Chalk outcropping on the coast. The area extends from the Queens Inclosure and Havant Thicket in the north to Langstone Harbour in the south. The Hermitage Stream catchment includes three branches, being the Park Lane Stream, the Riders Lane Stream, and the geographically separate Brookside Road stream at Bedhampton (which serves the eastern end of Portsdown Hill).

Environment Agency Main Rivers

HERMITAGE STREAM - The head of the main river is at the point where the Stream leaves the Queens Inclosure in Cowplain. This watercourse is the source of the Hermitage Stream and has its head in the Queens Inclosure at Cowplain, fed by sources now subsumed within the public surface water sewerage system of the Padnell estate. This heavily wooded area has altered little in the last three decades except for its increased usage by the public as a recreation and amenity area.

The stream runs from east to west along the southern edge of the Inclosure and acts as a natural barrier between the woodland and the developed areas to the south. Where it turns south at Highfield Avenue it is joined by a minor watercourse from Park Wood. Continuing southwards, the watercourse runs through a natural steep sided valley leading to the Hulbert Road, partly culverted at beneath the dual carriageway section of this major transport corridor. Approximately 80% of this area is now developed and almost all of the existing woodland has been lost. There are various groundwater and land drainage problems of a minor nature associated with the local geology, terrain, and interruption of the natural land drainage due to the development of the area which gives rise to flooding from springs and groundwater movement.

An improvement scheme up to Ramsdale Avenue in Leigh Park was completed in 1977 to allow for an in bank flow of up to 24 cumecs (at the down-stream end). The improvement scheme consisted of the construction of some 820 metres of earth channel, 3.2 kilometres of concrete lined channel with bank revetment in concrete blocks, various alterations and additions to highway and private bridges and structures, and the provision of an additional culvert under the Portsmouth - Havant railway line. The channel is designed to take predicted 1 in 50 year catchment flows. The lower reaches (below Barncroft Way) are also designed to accept a transferred flow of up to 3 cumecs from the adjoining catchment's main river, the Lavant, via the pipe link from Crossland Drive.

The Environment Agency recalculated the Hermitage Stream catchment in 1998, and the results were used when redesigning the central reach of the river through Leigh Park (between the Riders Lane stream confluence and Middle Park Way) as a natural open channel. This was completed in 1999 in a project jointly funded by HBC and the Environment Agency.

Environment Agency Telemetry – to give early warning of potential flood events caused by blocked/obstructed river grillages, the Environment Agency monitors water level on the Hermitage Stream upstream of the New Road bridge

PARK LANE STREAM – This main river originally had its source at Padnell Cuts Wood, now the Hazleton Way Estate. The stream passes through a natural valley

running under the A3M and south to Blendworth Common and The Warren, from where it is enmainned. Its lower reaches are culverted through St Clares Avenue open space, Sunwood Road and Overton Crescent before issuing into the Hermitage Stream just downstream of Middle Park Way. The watercourse drains the housing conurbation of the Warren and the western area of Leigh Park.

Havant Borough Council purchased St Clares open space (which includes the Warren) from Portsmouth City Council in April 1992 and so became the responsible landowner of the watercourse between Woolston Road and the Warren Dam. This transferred to the Environment Agency upon the enmainment of the Stream in 2005. They carry out a programme of planned maintenance to meet its land drainage obligations to provide for the free flow of water in the stream and to clear the grill protecting the entrance to the Dam.

At the foot of the open section lies the 'Giant Steps' area, named after the now-removed Warren Dam. This was a set of weirs with a flow control penstock. This structure was removed by the Environment Agency in 2009, although the replacement land form and grillage arrangements provide an equivalent level of flood protection. The culverted section of watercourse downstream of the Dam remains in the ownership of Portsmouth City Council, until it reaches Middle Park Way and ultimately outfalls to the Hermitage Stream.

RESERVOIRS ACT 1975 – THE WARREN DAM – This structure was designed to control the discharge of flood waters from the northern part of the catchment into the culverted section south of St Clares open space, and comprised an earth embankment with weirs, through which passed a culvert controlled by a penstock gate. Due to the amount of water it could impound, annual inspections as required under Section 10 of the Reservoirs Act 1975 were required.

Due to considerable vandalism and dereliction to the weir during the late 1990's, the penstock winding gear was been removed and the penstock itself was fixed half open to control the down-stream flow. Maintenance work in 2002 and 2003 resulted in an easier to maintain structure. Inspection of the dam passed to the Environment Agency upon enmainment in 2005, and they brought forward proposals to remove it and replace it with a much more open landform, whilst still providing the same flood protection to neighbouring properties.

RIDERS LANE STREAM – This main river has its head in a fan of minor issues between the Avenue, Longwood and Furzy Plain within Havant Thicket, and Hammond Hands Copse to the east of Leigh Park Lake (Staunton Country Park). The two main arms of these sub-tributaries join just north of Middle Park Way (from where the main river designation starts, since 2005) flowing south and west through

Great Copse to Dunsbury Way, then south and east via Riders Lane/Purbrook Way to join the Hermitage Stream at Corhampton Crescent.

There are persistent problems associated with the grills protecting the culverts under Middle Park Way, Dunsbury Way and Purbrook Way which require a programme of regular cleansing by the Environment Agency. This problem is especially acute in the autumn if the heavy leaf fall associated with the indigenous hard wood trees is accompanied by periods of heavy rainfall. In particular the blinding of the triple grills protecting the triple 24 inch diameter culverts at Purbrook Way causes flooding of the adjoining highway, even though a realignment of the stream including a flood retention area were provided north of Purbrook Way at Riders Lane open space in 1983. A possible long-term solution to this problem could be to increase the capacity of the culvert under Purbrook Way to a size which would include for the removal of the grills. This would have to be carried out along with improvements to the down-stream section of the Riders Lane Stream between Purbrook Way and the Hermitage Stream to ensure that there would be adequate provision for any increased flow.

Flooding can also occur upstream of the brick arched bridges in the northern part of Great Copse and adjoining Dunsbury Way (the latter causing overtopping and closure of Dunsbury Way on a number of occasions on 2000/1), and at the southern end of Great Copse where an undersized culvert provides a vehicular and pedestrian access across the stream from High Lawn Way.

The headwaters of this Stream are likely to be incorporated into the proposed Havant Thicket Reservoir currently being promoted by Portsmouth Water Company on land north of Middle Park Way.

BROOKSIDE ROAD STREAM – This main river has its source in the syncline valley to the north east of Portsdown Hill in an area of Upper Chalk deposits the remainder being predominantly London Clay. The open downland falls steeply to the east crossing under the A3M – where the main river designation starts – and on to Brooklands Road where it enters culverts which outfall at Brookside Road. The original stream no longer exists between Brooklands Road and Brookside Road, having been enlarged and piped to deal with the increased flows generated by the urbanisation of the area. Although the original pipe was designed to take the combined flows of both the adjoining housing conurbation and the stream it was necessary to duplicate it for part of its length in an attempt to alleviate flooding to property in Brooklands Road and Brookside Road. From Brookside Road the stream continues in open channel south under Bidbury Lane and then separates into two branches as it crosses open land, one being the original stream and the other a man-made irrigation ditch controlled by a private sluice gate. Rejoining north of the railway the stream is culverted under the railway and Mill Lane issuing in

Portsmouth Water Company land where it joins the Hermitage Stream at the Old Mill Dam.

ORDINARY WATERCOURSES – These are the responsibility of their landowners. In the late spring and autumn the ordinary watercourses of the catchment tend to become choked as a result of prolific weed growth. This can lead to flooding of adjoining land and property if they are not cut back on a regular annual basis in the spring and autumn. The situation can become further exacerbated in the autumn by the heavy leaf fall associated with the indigenous hardwood trees that remain on the routes of the ordinary watercourses and especially in the heavily wooded areas. On certain reaches deliberate obstruction of the watercourse is experienced.

HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL RIPARIAN OWNERSHIP – The Borough currently owns the St Clares open space which it purchased from Portsmouth City Council in April 1992 and has a budget to meet its riparian obligations.

The Sixpenny Six



Harry Loizides, Cllrs George and Betty Bell (JP), Bill Taylor, Barry Gardner, Les Humphreys.

Leigh Park's peaceful Sir George Staunton country park grabbed the national headlines on 23 July 1969, the same weekend that man first walked on the moon. Six local residents, including a magistrate and councillors, were jailed after refusing to pay an entrance charge imposed by the owners, Portsmouth City Council

The group became known as the Sixpenny Six martyrs and their battle led to greater access to the 150-acre park, then known as Leigh Park Gardens, for everyone.

During the summer months, the gardens had been open to the public on just two afternoons a week.

It was the decision to increase entry charges from six old pennies (2.5p) to a shilling (5p) which sparked mass walk-ins by protesters, led by two Havant councillors, George Bell and his wife, Betty. With BUI Taylor, Barry Gardner, Harry Loizides and Les Humphreys, they were jailed under a 14th century act, after refusing to be bound over to keep the peace. The six were all remanded to prison, but three days later were freed and police eventually dropped all complaints against them. On August 1, Portsmouth's parks and entertainments committee agreed to open the gardens to the public every day, from 10am until sunset, until the end of September that year.

In the same month, the then home secretary, James Callaghan, ordered a review of the 1361 act under which the Sixpenny Six were jailed. Three months later, Portsmouth agreed to abolish the entrance fee altogether, on condition the then Havant urban district council agreed to share the upkeep costs of the gardens. Members insisted their decision was nothing to do with the actions of the Sixpenny Six.



1st Leigh Park Company Girl Guides in the Cricketer's Inn hut, 1957. Third officer on the right is Mrs Isabel Cousins.



Donald Lake and Terry ? in the Stockheath School playground circa 1959.



The boys' entrance to Oak Park school in Leigh Road.



Main Block and Art Block. To the left was the technical Block with the masters rest room below it. The former gym was to the right. *Bob Hind.*



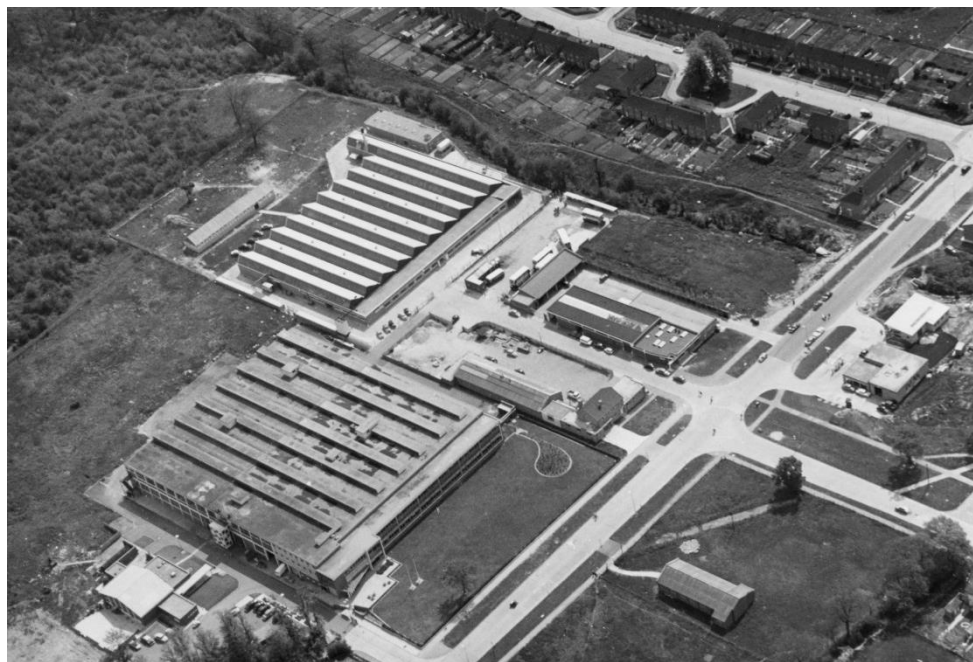
The first Leigh Park library in Stockheath Lane opened on 7 October 1957. *Geoff Salter.*



A Leigh Park football team – League Champions and Cup Holders.
P. Squibb, P. Sexton, P. Goodacre, S. Towler, G ?, Mr Oldreive, S. Chandler,
Christopher Lee, ? Spencer, J. Ross, M. Seymour, G. Blaylock, I. McKenna.



The front of the Tampax factory in Dunsbury Way.



Aerial view of the Tampax factory later called Tambrands, Minimodels, the Corporation bus depot, dairy and petrol station. *AF Milton collection.*



Bramdean Drive after occupation. *AF Milton Collection.*



Nissen Huts at the Stockheath Naval Camp.



Prefabricated bungalow similar to those erected in Havant Way after the Second World War.



The first houses nearly ready for occupation. Bramdean Drive 1949. *Photo. The News.*



Flooding in Corhampton Crescent, 26 October 1949.



A proper butcher's shop in Greywell.



The Leigh Park police station on the corner of Dunsbury Way and Bishopstoke Road



The Greyhound public house in Park Parade now the site of the Greywell Heights flats.



The Wheatsheaf public house in Botley Drive.



The Warren public house. *AF Milton collection.*



The Cricketers public house at Stockheath Common. *AF Milton collection.*



The Fox public house at West Leigh after closure in 2013.



The rent office at 230 Dunsbury Way.



Portsmouth Corporation buses line up ready to take residents on their 'Rent March' to protest at the proposed increases to their rents. *AF Milton Collection.*



The bowling alley Havant Bowl now Crown Bingo.



F.W. Woolworth moved from Havant to Park Parade and then to Greywell before finally closing. In every shopping area photographs there are prams and pushchairs everywhere thus showing how young the estate once was.



'Woolies' well stocked shop is sadly missed. *AF Milton collection.*



A busy Park Parade in the 1960s. *Alf Harris.*





Leigh Road, now Petersfield Road, looking north in the 1920s. Stockheath Road is on the left and West Leigh Road, now Martins Road, on the right.



Greywell Precinct shortly after opening. Tesco was originally Victor Value with Webb's furniture store opposite. Plenty of prams and pushchairs and a couple of Vespa motor cycles. *AF Milton collection.*



Park Parade in the 1960s. *Alf Harris.*



Early shops in Park Parade, 1950s. The author's 14 h.p. Wolseley motor car is on the left.



The first shops in Stone Square, 1950s.



Barncroft Way, 1950s.



The former bowling alley was converted into a bingo hall and opened by Diana Dors in 1984.



A long gone bank and shoe shop. *AF Milton collection.*



In 2001 St Michaels and All Angels Roman Catholic Church was hit by lightning and had to be rebuilt.



Battens Way 1953 coronation street party.



Aerial view of the lake in the Staunton Country Park. The position of the second Leigh Park House is shown at the top of the terrace.

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From 2011 - 2014 Making Space ran a project called On The Street Where We Live. The project was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and involved over 1000 local people. The boxes were made by artist Jon Lockhart and were inspired by his work in Leigh Park where local people told stories, gave photographs and memorabilia.



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To find out more please visit:

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Making Space, 2 Bishopstoke Road, Leigh Park, Havant, Hants, PO9 5BN

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